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# The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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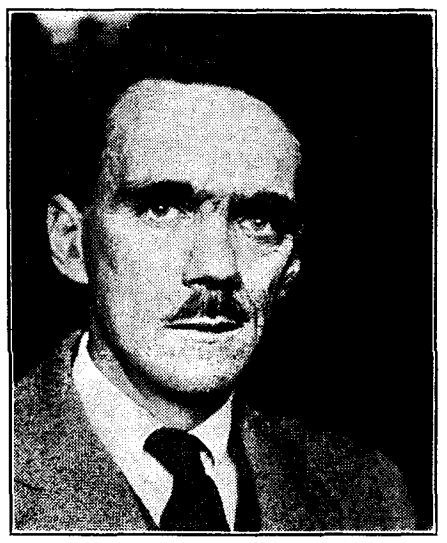

JAMES BOYD

## A Novel Hammered Out of Experience

*ROLL RIVER. By James Boyd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1935. $2.75.

Reviewed by BERNARD DE VOTO

THERE are a number of ways to write that undefined entity, the American novel. Mr. Wolfe has recently exhibited one way: to print the word "America" ten thousand times, to depict young Faustus as a victim of manic-depressive insanity, to fill the stage with Mardi Gras grotesques who suffer from compulsion neuroses and walk on stilts and always speak as if firing by battery, to look at everything through the lens of an infantile regression which makes a Dutchess County kitchen or a glimpse of a way station on the main line equally important with the death of one's father and the first meeting with one's mistress and all of them frenetic, and to fluff up the material of fiction, one part, with ten parts of bastard blank verse ecstasy. I wonder if only an accident of the calendar led Scribners to hold "Roll River" till "Of Time and the River" was well launched, or whether capital investment may not have had something to do with the schedule. For Mr. Boyd now exhibits another way to write an American novel, and he wins by a number of Mormon blocks. (For the untraveled: they are 220 yards each.) His book is only 600 pages long, it contains not a single goat-cry, and no one beats his head or knuckles to a bloody pulp on any wall within its covers. But those pages are filled with characters who are hammered out of American experience, whose emotions are the bitter bread of us all, and who are directed and controlled by a superb technician.

The fact that Mr. Boyd has hitherto chiefly concerned himself with the American past has sometimes obscured his great merits as a realist behind the popular conception of historical fiction as romantic. He begins this essay in that hardest of all decades for contemporary novelists, the eighties, but after triumphantly integrating that period, he comes on down to the present. And now there can be no easy dismissal of him as a period novelist. He is a realist: one of the very few first-rank novelists of his generation and one of the foremost technicians.

Thomas Rand is dying in a hospital, having overstrained himself with a rescue-crew after an accident in a coal mine which he owns. In the flagging lethargy

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## Writing Historical Novels

BY NAOMI MITCHISON

I ALWAYS wonder how other historical novelists write their books! Do they write them scientifically and sensibly, or just accidentally, the way I write mine? I wonder if they go to museums, and suddenly see something which catches the breath, which gets at one, which is a story. There was, for instance, the museum at Oslo in Norway, the only place where one can still see a Viking ship, dug up from the grave mound where it covered the body of a sixth century chief, preserved and exquisitely repaired by the loving and intelligent care of experts; that ship got me. It was beautiful, it had long, slim, fierce lines, and it was intensely practical—functional, we should say nowadays. I prowled round it, making notes, carefully weighing up just how the strakes were fastened together, just how the steering paddle was attached, realizing the amount of force it would need to hold that boat on its course in a good wind. From that boat I went on to look at contemporary Viking carvings; again I peered and took notes and rough measurements, even made little drawings, unintelligible to anyone but myself. For an afternoon I moved happily through Oslo,

NAOMI MITCHISON

and the ship made itself into a story—a story called "Spring" in "The Delicate Fire."

Other accidental things came into that story—the snow among the pines on the hills above Oslo, and the footsteps of animals which I didn't know. Earlier on I had been reading some Viking history and folk tales, but none of it had stuck in my mind except for a few names, and it was these names which joined up with the ship and the snow to make a picture in my mind so vivid and so insistent that it had to be written down.

A long book cannot of course be quite as accidental as that. The main idea must come first, although even that may come accidentally—not, at least, logically. One's mind, when one begins to think towards a new book, is open and receptive to one particular kind of thought-pattern: only something relative to that thought-pattern can penetrate to the creative level of one's consciousness. Only the events and philosophy of some completely relevant epoch in the past, will ring the bell in one's brain and become material through which the thought-pattern can manifest itself.

Thus the epoch is fixed, and with it the sort of ideas which the book is to express—as the good last century would have put it, the "moral" of the tale. The actual plot may come more gradually, working itself out as the book begins to take shape. Characters develop with a stroke here and there, half a sentence thrown in for balance which yet shifts the kind of person one's hero or heroine is turning out to be. But the plot has to be a plot of its own time, and the characters must think and act within the framework of their own time and its conceptions of happiness or value, and through their own materials of life. They must have some relationship with the present day, but it must not be overt from their side; they must never think of themselves as their readers' precursors nor have premonitions of the twentieth century. They must be so completely caught up in their own time that they are able to catch the present into it too.

That seems simple enough, yet it is amazing how easily it can be forgotten while writing; so many of one's similes, one's ways of thought and expression are essentially of one's own time and place, derived from materials and machines which are less than a century old. Such similes must never be allowed to occur to one's people of the past! Nor must they think much beyond their own place, their tribe or city-state or ancient empire; they had no museums and zoos of their contemporary world to visit. The whole framework of life was smaller, compacter, more intense.

The question is, how is one to get at that from out here in the present—their future? This is where the real work of historical novel writing comes in. One takes an epoch and gathers up one's knowledge of it. Most people have an uncertain and inadequate view of the ancient world; we tend in general to be educated by teachers who are themselves uncertain except about some one particular age in which they have specialized. When I first started writing novels I was in this state of uncertainty myself; my period was the First Century B.C.—Caesar's Gallic Wars, about which I remembered only the little which had been driven into my reluctant head at school while learning Latin, and Caesar himself was almost wholly due to Shakespeare!

Why then, had I got to choose this period? Because my mind was all stirred up with the troubles in Ireland in my own year of grace—1921—and the injustices committed by the Black and Tan troops during the British military occupation. Yet I didn't want to write directly about Ireland. I didn't feel as though I could. The creative part of my mind jibbed at that, perhaps because it was afraid—it wanted to keep out of the too real, too hard, too cruel world, for as long as I would let it. After all, I, with my generation, had been through the World War; we wanted rest from the present.

So it was that Gaul presented itself to me, plastic material for my parallel with Ireland. Mommsen and Ferrero had little to say, and the "Cambridge Ancient History" was still only in course of preparation. But there were other historians; I grubbed about happily. My ancient Brittany, the Armorica in which my story started, equated itself in my imagination with modern Cornwall, whose rocks and

(*Continued on next page*)

*Pinchot*

GLADYS HASTY CARROLL

## Stars Fell on Maine

*A FEW FOOLISH ONES. By Gladys Hasty Carroll. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

READING a book by Gladys Hasty Carroll is like finding mayflowers among the dead leaves of a Maine pasture. You know there are going to be the stars there, but you are always surprised to find them.

It is hard for a Maine man to say what he thinks of such a book. It is like talking about his own aunts and uncles, and it is in the Maine lexicon that one must be a little hard on uncles and aunts. They take affection for granted. They expect the tangibles.

I know the York Road. At least, I know fifty like it, running from pines and greenings in tipped-up orchards to clam-flats and the sea. The Bragdons and Linscotts are my relations and my friends. I can say I know Gladys Carroll has her houses, her smart-weed, ragweed, and her weather all correct. Her people talk right, with the Maine heartiness and click of the tongue. I have heard her talk that way herself. It isn't a dialect. It is a state of grace. But when it comes to writing about what is behind all this, that's a calf of a very different kink to his tail.

Mrs. Carroll is hard on her people. They

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### This Week

TWO LIVES OF MILTON
*Reviewed by Alexander M. Witherspoon*
CONTROLLING DEPRESSIONS
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DON'T EVER LEAVE ME
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## Writing Historical Novels

(*Continued from first page*)

birds and flowers I knew well. When I visited it last summer I found this was all right. My Gauls had a touch of Irish fairy tale—I liked them too much to see them very clearly. My Romans still had much Kipling in them, but were, I hoped, a little tougher—though not much, for in those days I let my native sentimentalism run riot! But it was the British Museum which produced the best inspiration. The bronze weapons and shields, the great curved war-horns—the lurs (made perhaps like an auroch's horn?)—all these were good, and the closer one looked the more educative it all became.

Here, for instance, is a shield of a rather curious shape and patterned with red enamel. How must the mind of the man who fashioned it have worked? What were his esthetic concepts? Had they anything to do with his religious ideas? If so, why? Again, what are the materials of enamel, where do they come from, how are they worked, and how and why was the stuff first thought of? Is it a substitute for coral? If so, what is the significance of coral? Is it blood, is it something to do with life? Looking at these brilliant red things, what moved in the hearts of ancient Britons or Gauls?

Here, now, is a sword. It is decorated in this way, and its length is so much. What must the man's hand have been like to grasp and wield it, what was his muscular control? Build up the man from his sword-hand! It is hard only being allowed to look at things through glass cases in museums which shut inexorably at a certain hour. Once I was luckier with my bronze age. It was in the museum at Stockholm, which has the best early bronze age collection in the world. I somehow managed to impress Stockholm with the fact that I was an important person—kindly reporters helped me! So when I went to the museum I was taken care of by a curator. What did I want to see or do? I wanted—oh how I wanted!—to hold a sword in my own hand, to wear on my neck one of those great bronze

weight with proud, curled [illegible]

one's collar bone. It was bound to be an effect of immense solidity and respectability, a pulling oneself together, a lacing in of the vagrant imagination, comparable with the effect which a stiff collar seems to have on a modern stock-broker. And again, the huge bronze bosses which the ladies of the same epoch wore on their breasts or middles—how proud and splendid and uncomfortable, how well calculated to stop any running wild in woods, how modern!

Greek vases must be handled, too, before the full significance can be brought out of them. One must drink lying down from a kylix, to see how even a tiny one adapts itself to the posture; one must feel the clay lovingly, and it will tell its story. The earliest Greek vases, the tiny Cycladic ones, are most lovely to feel—there is a smooth deliciousness about them; vases were rare then, and the user must have enjoyed every moment of touching them. There is, of course, an immense amount to be learned about Greek life directly from the vase pictures, but take something less obvious—like the Cypriote pots in the Metropolitan museum. Here is a vase which has a flying bird in front of it—the bird is highly stylized, very modernist in design—what was the mind like which conceived it? But you will notice also that the vase has two eyes of its own, just by the spout, above the painted bird, and a tail by the handle behind, and some little cross hatchings which might be wings. So the vase *is* a bird, and has also the picture of a bird on it—and perhaps the bird is a god. It is a fine mixed conception, but one which is familiar to the anthropologist.

One of the most interesting things I ever had to do was the construction of the country of Marob in my "Corn King and Spring Queen." I had to think out what the Graeco-Scythians were like, how their minds worked. And I had little to do it with. My main source book was Rostovtseff's masterpiece on the Iranians and Greeks, and especially the photographs in it. But unfortunately for me, most of the things themselves were in Russia—there was little in my own country except a few electrotypes. You have rather more in New York. I did not see the real things until more than a year after I had finished my book, in Leningrad, but how they lived up to all my imaginings! However, I had good photographs, and I took them round to various artist friends, including the great English painter and sculptor, Eric Kennington, and asked them to explain what kind of designs they were—for they were so modern in feeling that only a real modern could interpret them. And thus I worked out my Scythians, from the few remains of the things which they and their fellows made.

But how much more there is—the poring over maps, face down on the floor, the

and the less delightful [illegible]

she catches one out in the same way. It has all the fascination of fine embroidery, this pinning down of the little bright butterflies of historical fact, making them light on one's work. And how satisfactory when they fit in beautifully, as they should when one has a really adequate conception of one's epoch! Imagine a pursuit which combines chess, the sewing of samplers, the painting of pictures, and the collection of stamps, and you will arrive at some idea of the fascination of writing historical novels.

* *

*Naomi Mitchison's novels of ancient life are among the best of their kind that are being written today.*

## After Anger

By CHARLOTTE WILDER

this is a night—
when a dreadful incomprehension tautens
the meaning of what I see:

the shade of the bush is the grave of light;
the depth of the sod
is, in my heart,

a dirge for loving:

I will love, until the sun *blackens*
the rim of a static earth,

till the hungry spare their prey,
as the lion withdraws into himself
to dismiss the deer—

I will love resolutely, helplessly, and
assuredly,
otherwise:

this is a death, where I stand, in
the fright of a deathless abandonment of
goodness:

the bushes gloom; underground cones of crazed and distorted obliques, out of nature's counterpart. Death, be night to her; night, be sleep to the living.

# Milton Is Still Timely

*MILTON. By Rose Macaulay. New York: Harper & Brothers.* 1935. $2.

*MILTON. By Hilaire Belloc. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.* 1935. $4.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER M. WITHERSPOON

IT is an interesting coincidence that within the same month in which Miss Macaulay's and Mr. Belloc's studies of Milton appeared, Milton's protest against censorship and his eulogy of free speech were adduced as evidence by a reviewer of a current book on world politics and personal insecurity, and by a commentator on the case of Mr. John Strachey. "If Milton were alive today," as the saying goes, one would know pretty well from such studies as these of Miss Macaulay and Mr. Belloc, and from their predecessors, what side he would be on and what would be his views on most of the important questions of the hour.

MILTON AND TWO BIOGRAPHERS

*Drawings of Hilaire Belloc and Rose Macaulay by Schreiber.*

It cannot be said that either Miss Macaulay or Mr. Belloc has written a startlingly original book on Milton, and neither of them would lay claim to having done so. They have both used freely and wisely, and after fresh examination of them, the familiar documents and sources as well as the latter [illegible] and appreciative a critic and appraiser as Milton ever had. Like Miss Macaulay, he

times unconventional interpretations of Milton's life and work. For the most part both writers tell us what has oft been thought, but, it must be confessed, seldom so well expressed. These new lives of Milton are specially interesting as being the work, in the one case, of a woman, and, in the other, of a Roman Catholic, and women and Roman Catholics have usually been among Milton's severest critics. Miss Macaulay and Mr. Belloc are severe enough, in all conscience, but that both are so frequent in their expressions of admiration for and sympathy with Milton speaks well for their own fairness and for Milton's greatness.

Miss Macaulay's book is the shorter, more compact, more lucid, and more artistic of the two studies. She is less concerned with Milton as a poet than as a man, and Milton the man has never been more quietly and more unsparingly analyzed. Her very quietness and coolness make her criticisms more devastating and her praises more effective. Miss Macaulay's method is essentially that of a woman, of a wise, tolerant, civilized woman. She writes sympathetically and understandingly of Milton's childhood and youth, and her treatment of his married life, especially of his life with Mary Powell, is such as only a woman could have given it. She smiles in a superior feminine fashion at Milton's vanity and egoism, and his views of women she records neither with sorrow nor with anger, but in a calm manner and with a touch of gentle cynicism. The whole unfortunate affair of his marriage with Mary Powell she sums up eminently fairly: "There seems, in this tragic piece, no villain, only two victims."

Mr. Belloc's book is as bluff and good-natured and hearty, as much a man's book, as Miss Macaulay's is subtle and feminine. It is much looser and more discursive, and impresses one rather as a series of lectures, often popular lectures, than as a well-knit book. In the role of lecturer he talks down to his hearers a good deal, reminding them of the relative value of the pound sterling, of the number of feet in a line of blank verse, and of the meaning of the word iambic. But his lectures on Milton are always interesting and amusing, and frequently brilliant. His abundant sense of humor is evident on every page. Indeed, Milton's very lack of humor furnishes Mr. Belloc with many occasions for mirth. "When Milton attemps humor," says he, "it is as though some great ecclesiastic, devoted to high ceremony, were to stand on his head before the altar." Even in "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," "if one will go through the involved matter, it is glorious fun!" And who but Mr. Belloc has ever found in Milton's "Doctrina Christiana" "high comedy—I would almost say farce"? Milton, he concludes, "really did want to see Englishmen and the members of 'all the churches of Christ' going about with a bunch of wives. He was for Mormonizing us throughly." But Mr. Belloc does not slaughter Milton to make a Roman holiday. He is, on the whole, as serious, sane, humane, pamphleteer, the politician, the theologian, and, above all, Milton the poet—second only to Shakespeare in our language. As a royalist, he deplores Milton's activity against his king and on behalf of the regicides. As a Catholic, he sees regretfully in Milton the arch-Protestant of his generation and the champion of a dangerous philosophy of freedom in morals and manners and religion—a man who struck a blow at the very root of "that which is, above all other doctrines, the essential doctrine of a Christian man—that Jesus is God," and the special prophet of those who today keep the divorce courts busy. Mr. Belloc's chief contribution to Milton criticism, perhaps, is his insistence upon and analysis of the importance of the "Doctrina Christiana" for an understanding of the evolution of Milton's philosophy. As a classicist, he cannot find words to praise highly enough Milton's worship of Form, "the very core of Milton's poetic nature."

Of Milton's prose he finds the style as execrable as the subject-matter. But when he comes to Milton's poetry, especially to such pieces as "Lycidas," the sonnet On the Late Massacre in Piemont, and the great passages in "Paradise Lost" and "Samson Agonistes," Mr. Belloc excels all previous admirers and biographers in his enthusiastic praise. When he adds up the account, and it is a heavy account which he presents against John Milton, he finds that the poet "remains in our minds, after a long and full reading of him, the mighty figure that tradition accepts."

The layman will be amused and edified to see how often such experts as Miss Macaulay and Mr. Belloc disagree in their appraisal of Milton's work. And they disagree on about half of Milton's poetry. Mr. Belloc finds "Paradise Regained" well-nigh hopelessly flat and uninspired. Miss Macaulay admits its defects, but sees it as a whole firm and closely knit, with the spiritual force of sustained con-

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flict. The sonnet on the Piemontese Mr. Belloc regards as incomparably the best of Milton's sonnets, a perfect thing, and as powerful as anything in the language. Miss Macaulay dismisses it in five words: "famous (but not very good)"! The sonnet on Milton's deceased wife, which Mr. Belloc ranks as second only to that on the Piemontese, Miss Macaulay refers to only casually and coldly.

At the conclusion of both the books there stands John Milton, bloody but unbowed, and their respective authors with calm of mind, all passion spent, not unwillingly place the laurel on his devoted head. Both books are important and provocative contributions to Milton criticism. It is not likely, in our generation at least, that Milton will again be submitted to such searching analysis, or that two such brilliant pens will record the finding thereof.



*Alexander M. Witherspoon, a member of the department of English of Yale University, is an authority on Milton.*

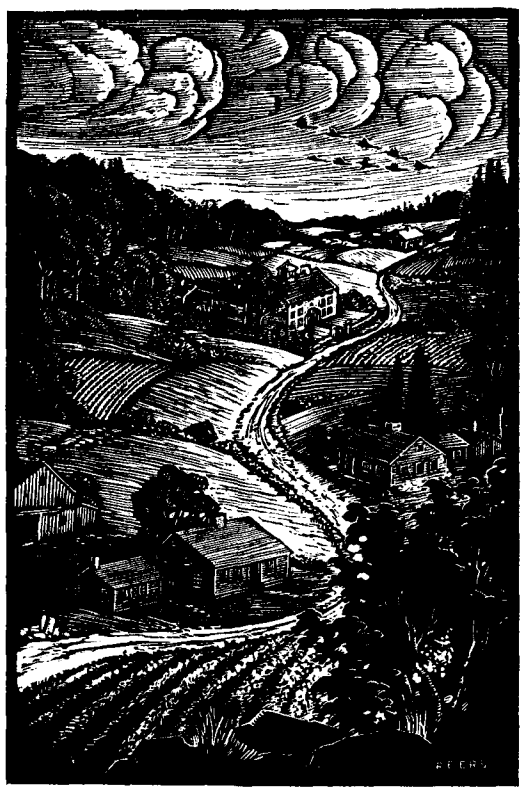
## Stars Fell on Maine

*(Continued from first page)*

are no better than they should be. Some are not even that. Some of them have to be kept in attics with barred windows. Some of them steal muskmelons. They have sharp tongues and know one another's tender spots. Most of the children in every batch grow up and go away and live cheap, day-to-day lives, or stay home and do it. But in every generation there is also a Gus Bragdon, making hard work into a hymn, a Kate Bragdon, who lives for everybody but herself, or a James Linscott, a swan hatched in a brood of geese. They stand out the way first spring flowers do, lovelier for dead things around them.

These few are more important than all the fierce light and brief bloom of Maine. Their creator here, as in "As the Earth Turns," goes down to things that cut to the heart: a father going in to look at a sleeping son, nearly man-grown, who missed being burned to death in a forest fire, in a single, silent moment—once in a lifetime—of tenderness; an organ with shelves full of stuffed owls, shells, and vases, and red-plush chairs—things that meant life itself to a farmer's wife after twenty years of slavery, and they being moved back to make room for her coffin. Sixty years sweep by, faces change, and Bragdons and Blaines and Linscotts, the three estates of Maine, the workers, the dancers, the loafers, merge into the little boy Jim; but loyalty and love of labor and singing and the poetry of mating remain the same.

Others write of the fading of that other culture of Maine, that of the sea captains. But Mrs. Carroll's culture will go on to later farms, no matter if the sowers of it change. For it is wider than Maine. It includes not only the Blaines and Bragdons, but French Canadians and newer strains to come. It is older than America. It is woven of women working and having children, men plowing, begetting, feeling good, and dying to make room on their acres for their sons. The Maine color gives it freshness. But it is the oldest and most beautiful thing under the sun, and the youngest. It is the psalm of living. Urgent, happy life that will work out its will no matter what empires perish. If one kind of people will not live it, somebody else will come along and live it for them. And there will always be the few that are like the stars blossoming in a New England pasture.



*Jacket design of "A Few Foolish Ones"*

# Something About the Fire

*CONTROLLING DEPRESSIONS. By Paul H. Douglas. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1935. $3.*

Reviewed by NEIL CAROTHERS

IT is one of the few cheering features of depressions that we learn from each one something more about their character. It is one of the many melancholy features that each one discloses itself as distinctly different from the others. The depression of 1837 taught us that land speculation is bad business, that of 1873 that deflation after war-time expansion means trouble, that of 1893 that a combination of declining gold output and rapid industrial development is highly explosive. What we have to learn from the great world depression of our time is not yet codified and annotated. But already it has revealed one distressing fact, the fact that our modern industrial system is so complex that its phenomena are impossible of analysis, its operation impossible of prediction. This is in no sense a reflection on the economics profession. No social science has been completely mastered, nor will be while there is human progress.

The book under review, Paul Douglas's "Controlling Depressions," illustrates strikingly the status of economic science in our time. There have been published recently a few genuinely worth while books on depression and recovery, notably in England and less notably in America, along with a veritable rain of trash and nonsense. But in this book we have for the first time by an American a comprehensive, all-enveloping attack on the entire depression problem, causes, consequences, and cure. The author is one of the outstanding economists of his time. He brings to bear upon the problem an acute intelligence and an exceptional knowledge of economic facts. He writes with vigor and charm. A hundred abstruse and tangled aspects of depression are laid bare with the skill of a master surgeon. And yet the book begins with a frontal attack on the extant depression theories of economists of world standing, develops the author's own one and only correct explanation, and proceeds to offer as a cure for depression a miscellaneous collection of policies, procedures, reforms, and nostrums, some impracticable, some mutually contradictory, and some demonstrably irrelevant to depression.

At the outset the author makes a fundamental distinction between the "generating" and the "cumulative" causes of depression. The former are those forces of disaster that develop in times of rapidly increasing industrial efficiency and consequent prosperity. They are two in number, the failure of industry to reduce prices commensurately with the decline in costs, which leads to excess profits and over-investment; the failure of the whole system to increase wages, salaries, and farm incomes in proportion to increased output of industry, which leads to insufficient consumption by the masses. Although the author's treatment is original and forceful, his "generating causes" turn out to be old and familiar friends, over-production on one side of the picture, under-consumption on the other. They have been reappearing, dressed in new terminology garb, ever since their first appearance in the thick German phrases of Karl Marx. In the present state of economic science, even after this analysis by Douglas, the only verdict must be a Scotch verdict, probably guilty but not proved. For example, disparity of farm incomes as a basic cause is a little difficult to accept when we consider either the depression of 1837 or the collapse of 1920 following an era of two-dollar wheat and thirty-cent cotton.

The "cumulative causes" are not causes at all, but merely economic conditions that make depression the sad catastrophe it is, such things as the credit system, which collapses, the rigidity of wages, which hamstrings industry fighting declining markets, and fixed debts, which weigh grievously on the victims of fallen prices and stagnant production. The author's analysis of the "cumulative" causes is actually a vivid analysis of the process of depression.

In one chapter a menacing note is struck. The universally accepted doctrine of economists that recovery from depression is inevitable is directly attacked, on both historical and analytical fronts. The issue cannot be settled by analysis, however subtle, and this reviewer merely comments that at this moment the world is steadily recovering from the most tragic of all depressions, despite all the blundering of peoples and governments blindly injuring domestic and international forces working for restoration.

The chapters dealing with the recovery efforts of the present administration are penetrating and discriminating. The economic demerits of the A.A.A. and the N.R.A., the unhappy results of arbitrarily high wages in depression, and the inflationary dangers of the monetary policy are clearly depicted. The Warren monetary schemes are damned with the faintest praise this reviewer has encountered. The author says this gigantic currency program may yet prove useful through the fact that devaluation made available a profit of nearly three billion dollars, which may be available for public works.

Limitations of space absolutely preclude more than a mere listing of the economic devices advocated. In their totality they offer a hopeless contradiction, inasmuch as half of them are offered as preventives of depression, the other half as radical relief measures when a depression has arrived. Among the major proposals are:

(1) A nationally managed currency and credit system, aimed at a rigidly maintained fixed price level.
(2) The abolition of all private banks (the so-called Chicago plan) and the substitution of what in reality is merely an arbitrary decrease or increase of paper money by the government, without any credit whatever as we know the term.
(3) A public works system, based upon excess government receipts in prosperity and excess expenditures in depressions.
(4) An arbitrary increase of wages with increased production or increased *prices*, and the converse.
(5) "A vigorous attempt to obtain flexible prices within the general price system," with a view to encouraging employment in one set of industries as it declines in others.
(6) The restoration of competition in small industry.
(7) Government ownership of the railways, other utilities, steel, chemicals, and electric machinery.
(8) The accumulation of large unemployment insurance reserves in good times for distribution in depression.
(9) The establishment (if the above named devices fail) of isolated barter production and trade economies for the unemployed, on a scrip basis.

Before this program the most intrepid reviewer stands affrighted. It is a strange and bewildering compound of individualism, fascism, and socialism.

This book will be a positive force in economic literature, a genuine contribution to the economics of depression. But it marks not the end of depression, but the beginning of controversy. The best time to put out depressions, like fires, is before they start. This book merely demonstrates that we do not yet know exactly what apparatus to use but that we are beginning to understand something about the fire.



*Neil Carothers, who is professor of economics and director of the College of Business Administration at Lehigh University, has been not only a teacher but a banker and an economic expert of the United States Department of State.*

THE LOST HEAD

*Grant attempts to replace it on Conkling's shoulders. From a cartoon by Nast.*

# Great Quarreler

*THE GENTLEMAN FROM NEW YORK: A Life of Roscoe Conkling. By Donald Barr Chidsey. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1935. $3.75.*

Reviewed by DENIS TILDEN LYNCH

HENRY ADAMS said of Roscoe Conkling: "Great leaders like Sumner and Conkling could not be burlesqued . . . their egotism and factiousness were no laughing matter." Conkling was touchy and temperamental. Being personally honest, he said things without fear. He informed a reporter when old New York comprised less [illegible] 1,000,000 inhabitants, that about [illegible] hundred of them were reformers, al[illegible]ing, of course, to the pseudo-reformers. Conkling was the Republican boss of the state, and subsequently he denounced them as men who paraded their own thin veneering of superior virtue, whose stock in trade was rancid, canting self-righteousness, and whose real object was office and plunder. In that Conklingesque diatribe he coined the classic excoriation: "When Dr. Johnson defined patriotism as the last refuge of a scoundrel, he ignored the enormous possibilities of the word reform."

Godkin called him "the great American quarreler." Several of his quarrels are an indelible part of our history. One of them temporarily wrecked the Republican party in the nation.

Mr. Chidsey's book attests his diligence in research, but he displays little of that equally important prerequisite of an historian, the judicial mind. Dealing with the most intimate form of history, the biographer cannot be lacking in the perception of the limitations of his subject and his contemporaries, and he must weigh dispassionately, and express, without bitterness, disagreeable conclusions. The author of 'The Gentleman from New York" dismisses one of the rumors concerning the daughter of Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase and Conkling with:

> . . . It libels her common sense. It makes her not only selfish and vindictive, . . . but also a damned fool. It makes Conkling a damned fool too, and a traitor, and a liar.

President Hayes he calls "a nice little man. . . ." Of Garfield he writes: ". . . there was that in his manner which today we would call Y.M.C.A.-ish, or Boy Scouty." When he describes Conkling in defeat, Conkling—to us, at least—the ever-proud, he describes him as truckling for aid: "Gone was that God-damn-you stare."

Perhaps all this was commendable restraint on the part of an author who irretrievably enmeshed himself in the tangled skein of New York politics.

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*The Saturday Review*
of LITERATURE

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## A Calloused Generation

A book lies on our desk called "An Almanac for Moderns," by Donald Culross Peattie, charmingly illustrated by Lynd Ward. Reading its day by day record of the country—red-wing blackbirds in the marshes, Spring constellations in the April sky, comments upon the specialists in nature—one remembers a vanished literature of quiet and reflection upon which many of our middle generation were nourished. Not only Thoreau, and Burroughs, and Muir, the nature writers, but dozens of authors of the personal and reflective essay, in which Oliver Wendell Holmes, and after him Samuel Crothers, and before him in more transcendental mood, Emerson himself, were practitioners, used to be the companions of the youth of that generation, and set a tone and made a background for the mind now unhappily lost.

We say unhappily, because the time has come to defend what for a decade or so every one has been ready to blame for a lack of realistic thinking, an avoidance of awkward issues, usually economic, and "mildness" if not "genteelness" in general. For, say what you will of necessity and changing taste, it is unfortunate that the generation now just coming into power has been reared upon a literature, often brilliant, very stimulating, and both inreaching and outgoing, yet still a literature in which violence sometimes and sensationalism very often have been subtly or obviously present. This is true of Europe, as it is true of America—and of journalism and of propaganda even more than of literature. Nor do the many obvious exceptions, some of them among the best works of contemporary literature, detract from the validity of this general statement. For twenty years young minds have been fed upon violence and sensationalism because since 1914 it has been a violent and sensational world.

This is no sermon on "oughts" and "shouldn'ts" which is being written here, but a defense, a double defense. First of the literature of quiet and reflection which, however out of tune with the violent present, is an indispensable auxiliary to the advance and even to the existence of a matured civilization. Next, of the new generation, which threatens to be a war generation, and in several European countries and among too many of our own countrymen, seems to be ready to become a war generation. For it is clear now that it has been calloused by too much reading about a defeatist world, and that may be one reason why it seems to be ready to take on a new adventure in destruction with a lack of imagination, or of interest in a future possible for civilized living, which is appalling to the elders who can remember both war and destruction, and also a time of youth when man's mind did not feed so nervously upon speed, sex, fear, economics, and social change.

The famous phrase of Thucydides, "education by violence," written of the Greeks who were taught by the misfortunes of a culture wrecked by war, is apparently only a half truth; was, indeed, a half truth for the Greeks, who learned little and kept less. Violence does not educate, nor sensationalism either—they condition the mind, making it realistic where it may have been sentimental, but hardening and stiffening it also, until it becomes unresponsive either to suffering or to determined hope.

The mind grows by what it feeds upon, and nourishment of this kind is indispensable for a culture that proposes to realize the ideals set forth by all the philosophers.

"PUT *THE CARE AND FEEDING OF INFANTS* IN HERE, AND WE CAN PUT *WHAT TO DO BEFORE THE BABY COMES* UP IN THE GUEST ROOM."

# Letters to the Editor: *Robinson's Tribute to Hardy; The Plight of a Haitian Writer*

### Two Sonnets

SIR:—The death of Edwin Arlington Robinson recalls to my mind several questions dealing with his early life at Gardiner, Maine. Some time before he was 26, Robinson wrote an Italian sonnet on Thomas Hardy. It was printed in *The Critic* (24: 348) for November 23, 1895, and then apparently forgotten. Why? The author never collected this poem. Why? None of his biographers have ever made use of the information it provides. Why? And just what information does it supply? The poem was—

FOR A BOOK BY THOMAS HARDY

With searching feet, through dark circuitous ways,
I plunged and stumbled; round me, far and near,
Quaint hordes of eyeless phantoms did appear,
Twisting and turning in a bootless chase,
When, like an exile given by God's grace
To feel once more a human atmosphere,
I caught the world's first murmur, large and clear,
Flung from a singing river's endless race.

Then, through a magic twilight from below,
I heard its grand sad song as in a dream:
Life's wild infinity of mirth and woe
It sang me; and, with many a changing gleam,
Across the music of its onward flow
I saw the cottage lights of Wessex beam.

And if in this sonnet we may find the record of the influence of the Wessex Novels on the mind of the young man in Gardiner, Maine, is it purely fanciful to suppose that, in another Italian sonnet, published shortly after Hardy's death, we are justified in tracing the record of Robinson's emergence from under the spell of "one in doubt,"—Hardy, whose doubts and sorrows had, rightly or wrongly, gained for him the title of pessimist? I refer to "A Christmas Sonnet: For One in Doubt," the last of the book of *Sonnets* (p. 89) published in 1928. May not Robinson's sonnet be read while remembering that Hardy had published a poem on "God's Funeral"? Robinson wrote:

While you that in your sorrow disavow
Service and hope, see love and brotherhood
Far off as ever, it will do no good
For you to wear his thorns upon your brow
For doubt of him. And should you question how
To serve him best, he might say, if he could,
"Whether or not the cross was made of wood
Whereon you nailed me, is no matter now."

Though other saviors have in older lore
A Legend, and for older gods have died—
Though death may wear the crown it always wore
And ignorance be still the sword of pride—
Something is here that was not here before,
And strangely has not yet been crucified.

And is it foolish to recall that both poets wrote about Tristram?

CARL J. WEBER.

*Colby College*
Waterville, Maine.

### Jacques Roumain

SIR:—May we bring to the attention of readers of *The Saturday Review* a matter of interest to all those concerned with the question of literary freedom? Haiti's leading poet and writer, Jacques Roumain, is now lying ill with malaria in a vermin-infested prison in Port-au-Prince, sentenced to three years' imprisonment on false charges.

Roumain has been for some years a literary figure of great interest. Born of a wealthy and cultured Haitian family, and educated in the best schools and universities of Europe, he was moved to turn away from his traditions and draw his poetic inspiration from the racial background of his own people. He has published poems, some volumes of short stories, and one novel, "La Montagne Encorcelée"—probably his best-known work which in a pure and limpid French reflects the barbaric warmth and color of primitive Haitian life.

In writing of the simple lower-class Haitians Roumain found himself passionately moved by their poverty and sufferings and incurred the hostility of the present government by becoming their advocate. He was arrested on a trumped-up charge of importing bombs into Haiti and brought before a military tribunal. Though the most careful official search revealed only books and pamphlets, he was sentenced on October 23, 1934, to three years in prison.

Friends in the United States who admire Roumain's outstanding achievements as poet and interpreter of his people and who know the fire and selfless devotion of his personality have formed a committee to work for his release. Among its sponsors under the chairmanship of Carleton Beals are Louis Adamic, Sherwood Anderson, Stephen Vincent Benét, Van Wyck Brooks, John Chamberlain, Theodore Dreiser, Waldo Frank, Robert Herrick, John Haynes Holmes, Langston Hughes, Arthur Kreymbourg, Robert Morss Lovett, Archibald MacLeish, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and some forty more writers, artists, and public men.

The Committee urges everyone interested in the cause of justice, free speech, and the fate of intellectuals under autocratic governments to draw up protests to President Stenio Vincent and send them to the Committee for the Release of Jacques Roumain, 74 Macdougall Street, New York, N. Y., whence they will be forwarded to Haiti. Copies of postcards of protest and petitions to be signed may also be procured from the Committee.

THE COMMITTEE.

New York City.

### Plagiarizing Book Titles

SIR:—The protection of mental products has been the subject of earnest copyright fights since years ago when Mark Twain, George Walton Green, and Major George Haven Putnam argued the matter in Congress. There exists today a more insidious danger, because there is not legal redress and because it is practised for the most part by people who do not care about their reputations, at least as writers. I refer to the adoption of book titles already published or to the adoption of plots based on some material theoretically considered as public property.

The copyright law as now constituted rules that a book title cannot be copyrighted. There is an underlying reason why an ordinary title like, let us say, "The Life of George Washington" should not be protected. But, if a Washington biographer calls his book "The Mammoth of Mt. Vernon," or a writer reminisces under the title "While Rome Burns" or a retired publisher writes "Chronicles of Barabbas," I do not think that any more Burning Romans or Chronicling Barabbasses should be permitted to imitate the titles for a period of, perhaps, three years. Especially do I think moving picture operators should be prevented from adopting titles and plots making only such changes as leave them technically safe. Of course, well known names are paid for; but I have seen cases where a tricky title by a little known author is adopted for movie purposes without public acknowledgment to the author's widow—much less payment. Legal or not that sort of thing is unethical or certainly would not be upheld in courts of equity. I suggest that neither the difficulty of arriving at proper legislation nor the possibilities of offending certain interests should prevent further investigation of underlying principles. There is apparently recourse to common law where damage can be proven. But, even where no monetary damage can be proved, an author likes to get credit for his mental ingenuity.

HORACE GREEN.

King's Point, L. I.

### Felix O. C. Darley

SIR:—I am anxious to gather all available facts about the life and work of the American illustrator, Felix O. C. Darley. Will those who have a knowledge of him, or any members of his family who may be still living, please be good enough to advise me? I would also be very greatly indebted to anyone who might be able to place in my hands letters or other interesting material relating to Darley or, to inform me as to the whereabouts of original drawings by him. The utmost care will be taken of any material.

REGINALD BREWER.

Fisher Bldg.,
Detroit, Mich.

The Saturday Review recommends
The Saturday Review Recommends:
A FEW FOOLISH ONES. By GLADYS HASTY CARROLL. *Macmillan.* The story of a man and a community.
CHRONICLES OF BARABBAS. By GEORGE H. DORAN. *Harcourt, Brace.* A publisher's reminiscences.
WISH AND WISDOM. By JOSEPH JASTROW. *Appleton-Century.* A history of human eccentricity.
This Less Recent Book:
FEBRUARY HILL. By VICTORIA LINCOLN. *Farrar & Rinehart.* The tale of an extraordinary family.

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# Chicago Boy

*JUDGMENT DAY. By James T. Farrell. New York: The Vanguard Press.* 1935. $2.50.

Reviewed by EUNICE CLARK

STUDS LONIGAN is dead: after a 1500-page story of his superb mediocrity he has been killed. No single thing was important about Studs Lonigan, but the unimportances out of which his creator made him were, seen together, Chicago, the American Mid-West, the twentieth century.

"Judgment Day" is the third volume in a trilogy of which the first two were "Young Lonigan" and "The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan." The first two books took Studs through adolescence and youth to his early twenties, which fell at the peak of prosperity. Studs was a cocky Irish-American bad boy. His father, a hard-working, God-fearing man, had prospered in the contracting business. Pool rooms, brothels, baseball fields, moviehouses, and dancehalls were Studs Lonigan's natural habitat.

The Studs Lonigan of "Judgment Day" is the same old Studs in many ways. He still mentally undresses every girl he passes on the street. He still alternately makes and breaks fine resolutions. He still dreams of being a big shot. But he has become tired and flabby. The down curve of Studs's personal vitality coincides with the national depression. Studs has bought stocks in a vast and much touted public utility company which goes bankrupt. The banks in Chicago are failing and old Lonigan cannot collect money for his work, or rent from his tenant. Mortgages are foreclosed all around them, families evicted on the street. "Judgment Day" would make an admirable primer for students of the business cycle.

James Farrell is admirably equipped to write authentic American city life, because he does not approach his world as a lonely soul-starved dreamer caught in the toil and moil of it all. He is, or was in his youth, a "regular guy," as democratic as Dreiser in the writing of "An American Tragedy," and he never writes down to Studs Lonigan. The Lonigan family, with its social aspirations, vices, virtues, and prejudices are the boundaries within which Farrell deliberately sets his own mind. No single perception is allowed in the writing which Studs Lonigan himself could not have had. Having thus foresworn the literary pleasures of interpretation, psycho-analysis, or poetizing, Farrell has proceeded to develop a technique which has been called "dictaphonic." His memory is phenomenal: in the voluminous recorded conversations of the Lonigans and of people in the street, he is, as one critic said, word-perfect. The undeniable power of Farrell's writing springs entirely from this unvarnished veracity.

For Farrell projects no world-doom, fall of Rome, or dying out of race into his picture. In "Judgment Day" there is a particular doom, Studs's life sordidly petering out in the midst of a people frantic with insecurity. There are going to be fights in Chicago, and Farrell knows it. The race and religious chauvinism of the Lonigans reaches a frenzy as the trilogy closes. Their tirades against the international bankers, Jews, hunkies, reds, niggers, and nigger-lovers become more frequent and vitriolic. It is also evident that in a better society Studs might have gotten a job, married his girl, and survived in spite of himself. Studs Lonigan was a regular, but he didn't put up much of a fight and he was beaten. It wasn't entirely his fault; his world was on a down-swing.

For a reader who wants to know a one hundred per cent American fellow inside and out, and who is adult enough to demand neither a spiritual giant nor a horny-handed son of toil for a hero, the Studs Lonigan books will do very well. "Judgment Day" is dignified by a more tragic sense of life than the other volumes, and is closer, historically and personally, to those of us who have spent the last ten years outside of a cloister.

## Hammered Out of Experience

(*Continued from first page*)

of his body, his mind is restless and, lying there, he tries to frame an orderly understanding of his own life and that of an aunt, the woman who on the whole has meant most to him. (With that simple instrumentality and two pages at the end of the first half of his book, Mr. Boyd accomplishes the time-symbolism to which Mr. Wolfe devotes a hundred thousand words.) His effort comprises fifty years and four generations of the Rand family. It creates twenty or thirty characters of the utmost brilliance. It also creates a community and a history—time vividly felt flowing through a city whose parts and castes and ages are completely integrated. It involves also an economics—mentioned here only to appease the young crusaders—and, what is much more important, the best presentation of the A. E. F. that has yet been printed. It is, in short, what a good novel must be: a novel made up of many novels which are fused so thoroughly that they are indistinguishable but which pile up significance many layers deep.

It brings to the understanding of human experience in fifty years of American life wit, subtlety, strength, profundity, and tenderness. Whether he is smiling at the Yale of Dink Stover's time, exploring a marriage between a romantic gentleman and a sexually ignorant woman, watching their nephew deal ignorantly with a frigid woman, casually checking deserters and fatalities in an attack, or examining the blend of timidity and disenchantment in middle age, Mr. Boyd knows his people down to the last symbol of their repressions. His detachment is at once clinical and kind—imaginative creation of the very highest order. To maintain it as sympathetically among the coquetries of the eighties as among the bewildered frankenesses of the twenties is a feat of main strength. And to write dialogue which seems equally brilliant and equally from the idiom of its time through all those periods of flux is a performance which cannot be overpraised.

There is no great hope that it will be widely acclaimed in the press. Mr. Boyd writes about individuals instead of classes, and, what is worse, one of his characters speaks skeptically of Labor and another capitalist is displayed in a heroic action—so one-half of the cheerleaders will find him lacking in *Zeitgeist.* The other half will look in vain for the flatulent giantism which, at the moment, they hold to be the purest vision of America. But he has brilliantly written a searching, wise, and very profound novel about the people of our time and their heritage. His people and their triumphs and tragedies will not be forgotten by readers who classify fiction among the fine arts.

# Bright Surfaces of Two Worlds

*DON'T EVER LEAVE ME. By Katharine Brush. New York: Farrar & Rinehart.* 1935. $2.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

WITH her new novel Miss Katharine Brush definitely takes her place as the most skilful reporter of surfaces now writing. In her previous novels she has already shown that you could give her the name of any year since the war and she would tell you what people were wearing and what furniture they liked, what steps they were dancing to what tunes, what catchwords they were using, and what were the superficial mass-emotions of the crowd. She could do all this with a peculiar vividness that would make a man enjoy reading about her women's dresses, and with an economy in the choice of detail that seemed to condense a year's file, not indeed of newspapers, but of women's magazines, into a few pages. But it was not until the present book that one could acquit her of the suspicion of having deliberately engaged, like so many of the slick-paper writers, in a luxury trade, in purveying imaginary splendors to middle-class readers. But "Don't Ever Leave Me" turns aside, part of the time, from the rich and the Bohemian. It is laid in a mill town in Pennsylvania, where there is a small rich group at the top and a mass of workers at the bottom; and it is concerned with a Babe Cunningham, whose first husband was killed in the war and who after various vicissitudes is now the wife of the local magnate, having an adored son by her first marriage, a sullen, difficult boy who is carrying on an affair with the wife of a mill hand.

The action takes us into both worlds, and one thing becomes abundantly clear, Miss Brush is intensely interested in everything that comes under her eye, like Browning's Fra Lippo Lippi, just because it looks as it does. It is quite clear that she is not a tradeswoman, she is a reporter. But her deficiencies are as remarkable as her qualities. She has the same interest in what may be called the front-room furniture of people's minds, that she has in other furniture; she takes keen delight in contrasting the "doll" of the twenties with the "wench" of the thirties, as shown by their stock-in-trade of ideas; but she cannot in any real sense penetrate beyond this. Her attempt here to analyze the relations of Babe Cunningham with the husband she likes, the lover she loves, and the son she idolizes, remains for all her effort slight and unmoving. And still more, she cannot make characters develop so as to find their own way out of a situation. In "Night Club," it will be remembered, there was only a series of beginnings; in "Young Man of Manhattan" a shameless cutting of knots; in "Red-Headed Woman" there was no progression of the characters, but only of the scenery. There is evidence that in the present book Miss Brush has tried to minimize this by her always brilliant technique; the actual action takes place in a single evening, at a Country Club dance. But here again the characters stand still.

Nevertheless, when all is said against it, "Don't Ever Leave Me" remains a brilliantly painted picture of a part of the contemporary scene. The historian of the future, looking for details of the way we live now, will find more here than in thumbing sheaves of periodicals; and if in his chapter on morals he cautiously weighs this against "Appointment in Samarra," and decides that though one witness says that the rich in Pennsylvania mill towns go to hell sullenly, there may be some credibility in the other testimony that they go to hell gaily, he will not be so far wrong.

KATHARINE BRUSH

# Rumanian Stories

*WINNING A WIFE. By Peter Neagoe. New York: Coward-McCann.* 1935. $2.50.

THE primary impression received from Mr. Neagoe's stories is one of freshness and abundant vitality. The strong and simple rhythms of his prose are well suited to the evocations of Rumanian peasant life which constitute the greater part of his new book, and it is only after reading a considerable number of them that an occasional technical insecurity becomes apparent, and the sameness of the characters begins to be monotonous. Mr. Neagoe's Popa Radu is much like his Popa Anghel, while the ripely beautiful peasant heroines have about as much individuality as the grains of the corn which they cultivate when not engaged in more intimate affairs with the village blades. The author's work is interesting, therefore, largely because it treats authentically of people and manners which are still strange to us, and unfamiliar in the English literary canon. Yet in "The Shepherd of the Lord" a more sincere emotional note is achieved.

Throughout the book as a whole, Mr. Neagoe amply proves his ability to convey in English the picturesque atmosphere and highly colored dialogue of his native Transylvania, but he sometimes does not seem to know quite what to do with figures and background once they are created. Some of the stories thus remain lustily humorous anecdotes without pronounced narrative value. Also, the four pieces which are deprived of Rumanian local color are clearly less effective and spontaneous than the others, though they indicate the route which Mr. Neagoe must follow if his talent is to outgrow the limitations imposed upon it by the formulas which he is employing at present. And this talent is so evident that such expansion seems highly desirable.

JACKET DESIGN FOR "ROLL RIVER" BY ROGER DUVOISIN

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# The BOWLING GREEN

## "Barabbas"

*CHRONICLES OF BARABBAS,* 1884-1934, *By George H. Doran. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1935. $3.50.

AMONG the obscure New York hotels to which, for reasons of my own, I have sometimes made sentimental pilgrimage, is the Aberdeen on 32nd Street. It was an occasional overnight refuge for Grub Street Runners when I first had a publishing job. In those days there were a number of publishing offices on 32nd Street. I wonder if anyone else remembers a little chophouse on that street called the Blossom Heath Inn? It was almost next door to Doubleday's office at 11 West, and often—with a Pink Slip cashed by Augie Murphy (now as then Doubledays' admired exchequeress in the New York office)—promising authors were well gruntled there at lunch time. Surely the great success of Ken Roberts's fine historical novels on Doubleday's list really dates from an all-afternoon lunch at the Blossom Heath twenty years back. Dear old Guy Holt, who died a year ago, would remember those lunches. There was a brand of cigar obtainable there, called *Nabocklish;* the name sounds Gaelic, I have no notion what it means, but it became a kind of password among us; it had a sort of carefree sound and became an ejaculation suggesting "We should worry." Among the young writers who were entertained there were two who happened later to write two very different books with the same title. One, a novel now known to all the world; the other, earlier by several years, a little book of agreeable verses. Both were called *Main Street.* It was disturbing to learn, after cajoling Miss Murphy to O. K. the pink slip for Editorial Expense, that these two authors belonged to a rival house. Joyce Kilmer was faithful to George Doran; and Sinclair Lewis was at that moment Doran's literary scout.

But what I am leading toward are not my own small recollections but those of a much livelier fellow. I mentioned the old Aberdeen Hotel because George Doran once lived there to be handy to his office at number 15. It was from the Aberdeen that he looked down and saw his office building on fire—just after he had providentially paid a premium for $10,000 extra insurance. It was there too, I think, that the most important accident of his whole publishing career took place. It was in 1908, soon after Mr. Doran had started his own business. Mrs. Doran, ordered by the doctor to take a few days' complete rest, needed some books to read. Among those sent up for her by G. H. D. was Arnold Bennett's *Old Wives' Tale,* newly out in England. After a day's reading she telephoned her husband and begged him to cable for the American rights. He did so, and 1000 sheets were ordered. It is pleasant to hear that it was the enthusiastic selling of young Fred Melcher, then a clerk at Lauriat's in Boston, which exhausted the first importation and started the book moving. Not only for Bennett's own books, and the intimate friendship that ensued, but also for the succession of brilliant young writers who came to Doran at Bennett's suggestion, this was a turning point in the publisher's career.

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George's book is one which will have very great interest for all who are concerned or curious about our little world of publishing. Memoirs of publishers are always exciting because there is no other career that brings a man so intimately and frequently in touch with egregious people; and on terms of immediate social freedom. George tells a delightful anecdote of sprightly little Buffy (Elizabeth) Cobb, Irvin's daughter, when the Dorans arrived as strangers to live next door to the Cobbs in a well-mortgaged Suburban-on-Hudson. "They must be nice people," said Buffy, who had been watching the new neighbors' kitchen premises; "they have such nice garbage." Even the garbage of the publishing business, if you'll condone the phrase, is attractive. Combining the charm of the arts with all the hilarity and headache of commerce, in a trade of great social influence, it is a business of compelling allure. It is overcrowded, and it breaks hearts, but those who know it would exchange for no other.

And George's book is George himself. To tell you the truth I had no idea he would be so good a writer. Except for an occasional overuse of the word "precious" or for the description of Mary Roberts Rinehart's smile I would not edit away any of his vivacious zeal. The homage to Mrs. Rinehart is well-deserved—not only for their affectionate personal relation as grandparents of the same child, but because she was at that moment autographing innumerable books for customers at Marshall Field's. And George is not only a sentimentalist but also an intensely alert business man. This book, which describes 50 years of adventure in the book trade, has the same quality of infectious impulsive charm, high spirits, mixed Irish emotionalism and mischief, together with something hard and canny at bottom, which we have always relished in G. H. D. I find a parable of sadness in the book reaching us just at the time that the *Mauretania,* which George loved and travelled in so often, sails to be broken up.

GEORGE H. DORAN ABOARD THE *MAURETANIA*

The pleasantest phase of this excellent book is its spirit of youthfulness, its sympathy with the younger generation in publishing. There was always a touch of gallantry, swank, panache, in G. H. D. When he carried a cane he swung it and went along the street as if he were going somewhere. Young authors were fascinated by him at sight. When beautiful and powerful booksellers came to town, his handsome car was at their disposal. In his own office I rather guess he might be a pretty exacting taskmaster. I remember that poor Ivan Somerville his manufacturing man used to look pretty haggard sometimes. He made a very bad mistake (he admits it handsomely) in not understanding Gene Saxton who is one of the real editorial geniuses of our time. I hope all this doesn't sound like epitaph; but George speaks with such honest candor in his book that he invites his friend to talk blunt shop. On the final and fantastic error of the Doubleday merger he touches only lightly. It was an error of the first magnitude on both sides. George thought he was safeguarding the future of his young men. Doubledays' thought they were securing the remarkable literary prescience which had marked the Doran imprint. But the publishing business is (on its creative side) an intensely individualized affair. Like the theatre it revolves on hunch and temperament. It's all very well to draw up stock agreements, but personalities, diverse ambitions and methods, don't merge so easily. The long illness of Frank Doubleday, and then the era of declining business, helped to complicate matters. The union was entered into in good faith on both sides. It didn't work. In the detached perspective of the outsider its most important result was the founding of one of the ablest and most successful of younger houses, Farrar & Rinehart. I keep, as a rather pathetic souvenir, one of the special copies of Tarkington's *Claire Ambler,* bound in white bridal vellum, issued in 1928 as a consummation of the marriage. "This first volume over the new imprint," it says, "has been autographed by the author and the publishers." In 1930 George fled to the embrace of the Iron Maiden, Mr. Hearst—where he became a "notable prisoner." That, by the way, is St. Matthew's description of Barabbas. The line "Now Barabbas was a robber," which Lord Byron jocularly altered to "was a publisher," occurs in St. John, XVIII, 40. George, as an old Bible salesman, should have checked this.

❧ ❧

It's odd that a man who was himself a brilliant salesman says nothing in this book of his own sales boys who helped him build up so remarkable a business. It grew from $200,000 in 1908 to 2½ millions in 1927. I wish there were space to suggest the whole story, which he tells with most infectious good humor, and with many vivid little character sketches of his authors and associates. It begins in the familiar way: the ambitious boy of 14 who sees the sign SMART BOY WANTED. That was in Toronto, where G. H. D. was born of North of Ireland Presbyterians in 1869. He just escaped being christened, for his mother, George Oliver Doran, which would have given him embarrassing initials. After early experience in a Tract Depositary he joined an evangelistic publisher in Chicago, "the predatory Fleming H. Revell." Nothing in this book is more agreeable than George's deliciously ironic and yet fair-minded description of the humors (and occasional hypocrisies) of evangelical publishing. As a boy of 15 in Toronto he had met old Matthew Hodder of the famous English firm Hodder & Stoughton. Twenty years later he became the official representative of H. & S. in America, and their publications were the nucleus of his list. His description of old Hodder, and his brilliant grandson the lamented Ernest Hodder-Williams, is rich in mirth and affection. Dulac's edition of the *Rubaiyat* horrified old Mr. Hodder until he learned it was earning £800 a year profit. The early connection with pietistic publishing helped to tinge the Doran list for many years, and sometimes was a source of humorous incongruity—as when G. H. D. was reproached for bringing out, almost simultaneously, Moffatt's New Testament and *The Green Hat.*

The chronicles of this very lovable Barabbas are full of good stories. His first capture outside the devotional field was Roswell Field's *Bondage of Ballinger.* He became an American citizen; heard Bryan give the Cross of Gold speech. Like all publishers he has errors of judgment to look back on. Ralph Connor was Revell's big fiction seller, but G. H. D. agreed with his employer to turn down Harold Bell Wright and also Sheldon's *In His Steps*—showing that even then our young editor had germs of admirable literary taste. His valiant attempt to find a public for Mary Webb was an example. There is refreshing candor in some of his confessions: that he never understood why all the excitement about *Revolt in the Desert;* that Marie Corelli's pique (because he did not mention her name in an interview) caused her to cancel her contract and saved him $20,000 in promised advances; that he was always incapable of appreciating really great poetry. (He is evidently at a loss to know how to comment on Elinor Wylie, the greatest poet on his list.)

I have given you no notion of the richness of anecdote and comment in this valuable book. George's lively blend of British and American temperaments makes him a unique officer of liaison between the two countries.

Similarly his paradoxical mixture of sacred and profane makes him the most enchanting of companions. Vivid and frank as his chronicle is, he has been more discreet than you might suppose. I think of many things he might have told; some of them were generous kindnesses done by him to people in trouble. When he says that the book he would best like to have written is *Of Human Bondage* he tells much of himself. Ambitious, high-strung, sensitive, sometimes a bit of a snob, a multiple soul. It is impossible to believe that he will not again have his suite at the Savoy and throw the most intelligent frolics in the publishing business. Blessings, George, from a friend and beneficiary of long standing! If some of the copies of *Barabbas* look a little worn in the shops it will be because the booksellers themselves have been reading them.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

## Quiet English Humor

*THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR. By Humphrey Pakington. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.* 1935. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I MUST say that I found this quiet novel a decided relief from the machine-gun quickfire of many modern American novels. It seems amazing and incredible to a New Yorker that there should be such drowsy hamlets as the village of Compton Marley. It seems also amazing that there should remain in this age such a simple yet satisfying love story, of young people, as that of Crispin and Mary. Verily simplicity and its enduring charms have not passed altogether from the earth!

But that is far from the whole story of the merit of Humphrey Pakington's book. He is distinctly amusing. He possesses a characteristically English type of humor in which you either find great relish or to which you prefer a more rushing and rowdy American brand. I don't see, myself, why one can't like both—or either—at different times. I settled down with "The Eligible Bachelor" and soon found myself actually laughing (or snorting) out loud every once in a while. This was not the riotous phrase of Wodehouse. But it was a way of saying things that sneaked up on you insidiously! Mr. Pakington has a decided way with his family, the Warmstrys—that reading from Shakespeare!—and the character of Admiral Harbottle, and the terrific dominance of Susan Canfield in her Pageant of England. I shall not mention more delights, though there are plenty more—but it will be long before I forget the Pageant or the misfortune overcoming Mr. Podmore-Jones in the Boscobel Oak. It was a cedar, and there was suddenly "an ominous cracking sound." . . .

Yes, decidedly, Mr. Pakington has a way of putting things that brings out the richest colors of any situation! Yet his eye on the petty failings of humanity, of which he makes such delightful copy, does not miss their agreeable side.

My only criticism of the novel would be that it is a trifle too long for the actual weight of its matter. And, of course, to many hotfoot Americans it will seem too leisurely, and rambling, to be bearable. As for me, I should like nothing better than to retire to some spot in a summer countryside, at the present moment, with an armful of novels like this one. Maybe then I could forget the dire state of the world, and the calamity that is howled from every side, in the certainty merely that Crispin was a young architect who was building a house for Miss Bowdler-Smith, and that Mary Parker was a perfect corker of an indigent heroine whom he was sure eventually to meet and fall in love with!

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# Books to Make Gardens Grow

*We are glad to bring together the reviews of five garden books on this page if only to indicate that one of the healthiest instincts of mankind persists even in political and economic cataclysms. Mrs. Marion Purvis Smith, who is responsible for the three unsigned reviews, is an authority on herbals, and what might be called the scholarship of gardening. Mr. Wright, editor of* House and Garden, *is equally competent to discuss design. Amateur gardeners ourselves, we note with particular interest the new resources for northern gardens described in the book on Mexican plants, and read with some dismay of the connoisseur's idea of proper planning surveyed in "Garden Design."*

## Color and Pattern in Garden Making

*GARDEN DESIGN. By Marjorie S. Cautley. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.* 1935. $5.

Reviewed by RICHARDSON WRIGHT

TO the average gardener, content with helping the birth, growth, and struggle of plants to fruition, the subjects of scale, texture, repetition, and rhythm in garden design are just so much esoteric persiflage. Nevertheless, these and a score of other points in design are essential to the making of good gardens, and in this work Miss Cautley has set them down in portions easy to consume.

She begins with the principles of design, going from the abstract to the actual, and explaining her theories with familiar parallels. When she wants to demonstrate a symmetrical balance she uses the figure of a lateen sail as compared with the nicely balanced sail of a four-rigger. These theories explained, she begins applying them to the problems of garden design—to garden patterns, the location of the house in respect to its gardens, suburban properties and city lots. The next step goes into more intimate details—foliage walls, lights and shadows, the use of water, sundials and garden furniture, and the placing of ornaments.

It is in her fourth chapter—on color—that she tackles a problem more familiar, though just as esoteric, to many average gardeners. By the use of the Munsell color sphere this subject unfolds as smoothly as a rose, and the planting of a flower border begins to appear as an easily accomplished task. Discussions of form and texture follow this, the form and texture of many types of gardens—those for winter, those that repeat the informality of nature, city gardens, intimate gardens. With each of these is a complete plant list. They are the true shrubs and flowers that the average discerning garden-maker would use. We have rarely seen better selected lists or more concise and helpful plant descriptions.

As Miss Cautley passes, step by step, from theory to application in garden design, she illustrates each point with well-chosen photographs and sketches obviously gathered by extensive travel and wide research. She has drawn on a dozen or more countries for her examples. An ancient bridge in France shows how a hedge of upright and spreading plants may be arranged, the pinnacles of a Gothic cathedral repeat the stand of western spruce beside a stream, the mass of a skyscraper find its counterpart in massed tree planting for a country estate. These examples, aided by text which keeps rigidly to simple statements, carry the reader safely out of the realm of the esoteric into a clear understanding of how good gardens can be made and why one garden is more pleasant than another. Miss Cautley has written a grammar of garden design and garden making. By reading it one comes to a better capacity for garden enjoyment.

TURTLE BAY GARDENS
*Photo by City Gardens Club of New York. From "Garden Design."*

## Plants from Mexico

*MEXICAN PLANTS FOR AMERICAN GARDENS. By Cecele Hulse Matschat. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1935. $3.50.

IN 1570 Phillip II of Spain appointed a learned physician of Salamanca Protonédico of the Indies and sent him to Mexico to collect and study medicinal plants. This was Dr. Francisco Hernandez who returned to Spain in 1577 with sixteen folio volumes of text and drawings of plants and who received 60,000 ducats for his work. But he had contracted fever on his travels and died the following year. His unpublished descriptions of the plants, animals, and minerals of Mexico were translated from Latin into "lingua Mexicana" by Brother Francisco Ximenez and printed in the City of Mexico in 1616—the first book on natural history to be published in the New World. The copy in the British Museum belonged to Sir Joseph Banks. It is a small, dingy octavo volume with crabbed type, yellow paper, and a clumsy calf binding. The descriptions of plants and trees run along in easy Spanish until one comes to the noun, which is apt to be *cocoxochitl* when it is not *hoitzmamaxalli*. The fact that the first is the dahlia and the second the flowering thorn is not at once obvious. This last bit of scholarship is not pure swank but is derived from very attentive reading of Mrs. Matschat's "Mexican Plants for American Gardens." The title is a model of modest understatement, for the book is really a collection of chapters or essays on Mexican history and culture from the point of view of the botanist and the horticulturist.

Part I deals with the agriculture and gardening of Mexico before the Conquest, with Spanish colonial gardens, and with the gardens of modern Mexico. Special emphasis is laid on *patios* and walled gardens. Mrs. Matschat's very extensive botanical information is displayed with admirable restraint in Part II. After a bibliographical introduction on the Floral History of Mexico, she devotes a chapter each to the desert plants (chiefly cactus), to the wild flowers suitable for introduction into American gardens, to bulbs, shrubs, ornamental and foliage plants, and to vines. Her concise descriptions of plants in their native habitat, the interesting items she notes in connection with their discovery or use, and her cultural directions are so excellent that the reviewer is tempted to overstep the council of moderation to which the author has subscribed.

In an appendix, the common plants of Mexico are listed in three columns; the first gives their common names, the second, their botanical names, while the third contains a brief but vivid description. This is for the use of visitors to Mexico who otherwise might "lose much, both in the way of pleasure and knowledge, by their inability to identify the plants and fruits seen in gardens and markets." Has any one ever calculated the extent of the losses in "pleasure and knowledge" for the lack of such cleverly compiled lists for visitors in other lands?

The book is pleasantly illustrated with photographs and pen-drawings. It has a short bibliography and an excellent index.

## Medicinal Herbs

*THE PHYSICK GARDEN. By Edith Grey Wheelwright. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1935. $3.

THIS is one of those maddening books which one reads with persistent interest and which leaves one in a state of mild exasperation. It is so good and might have been so much better! This state of mind probably results from disappointment of an unfulfilled promise. The publisher announces and the author proposes two aims; one is very comprehensive—"The story of man and his medicines." . . . "The history of medicinal plants and their uses, from the earliest ages to the present." The other is a more manageable project, "the evolution of Anglo-Saxon leechdom into the British Pharmacopœia." That the former aim is not accomplished does not, as a matter of fact, detract from the interest and importance of the latter, but in almost every section, the reader is prompted to wish that a student with such wide technical knowledge as Miss Wheeler possesses, had either pushed her researches much further before publishing, or else had contented herself with a straightforward narrative of British medicinal plants.

The chapters on the medicinal practices and the drug plants of India, China, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the early Christian era are in reality brief introductory notes to the more detailed study of British medicines and medicinal herbs. After Chapter IX, "Anglo-Saxon Medicines," notices of continental drug plants are fragmentary (though often exceedingly suggestive), and those of the world beyond Europe virtually non-existent. The chapters on European and English herbals are sketchy and add nothing to the work of Lady Amherst, Mrs. Arber, and Miss Rohde. Miss Wheelwright's positive contribution begins with Chapter VII on "Medicinal Plants of the British Flora," in which she gives a series of brief studies packed full of botanical and pharmaceutical learning and of folk-lore. This material might be expanded into an excellent book. The last chapters on the trade in medicinal herbs, the cultivation of drug plants in England and the British Empire, and on the "contents of the vegetable cell," are of the nature of appendices, and reflect the great interest in herb culture which has sprung up in England since the war.

The book is *not* a "story of man and his medicines from the earliest time to the present day." It is a series of botanical and pharmaceutical studies with special emphasis on the medicines and medicinal plants of the British Isles.

*From "Week End Gardening"*

## Amateur Gardening

*WEEK END GARDENING. By Sterling Patterson. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1935. $2.50.

*EVERYMAN'S GARDEN. By Max Schling. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1935. $2.

SINCE John Evelyn wrote the "Kalendarium Hortense or Gardener's Almanac directing what he is to do monthly throughout the Year" in 1666, a vast number of persons have been impelled to write their gardening experiences and to arrange them according to the Labor of the Months. Neither depression, drought, nor dust-storms diminish this crop of annuals. Two of the 1935 harvest deserve special mention.

"Week End Gardening" and "Everyman's Garden" have one feature in common. Each describes the experiences of an amateur gardener who is also a business man. One is a busy business man who can only devote the week-end to hobby. The other is a "retired busir man" who devotes his entire time to garden. The week-end gardener cu vates a quarter of an acre, the full-time gardener four acres and a half. Both books are packed full of well-organized information, but for clear-cut directions, concentrated experience, labor-saving devices, and general good sense, one cannot hope in this imperfect world for a very much better work than Mr. Patterson's.

The material is divided into the work which must be done in the four week-ends of each month throughout the year. This is sometimes planning, designing, or reading. In his quarter-acre garden, Mr. Patterson includes shrubbery, perennial and annual borders, a lily pond, a few fruit trees, and a small vineyard. Explicit directions about the care of lawns, the preparation of garden soil, selected lists of plants that will sustain a moderate amount of neglect, and that bane of all gardeners' lives—spraying for pests and blights—are at once the most comprehensive and the most practical that this particular reviewer has ever read. We do not know what Mr. Patterson's "business" is, but if he should prove to be an efficiency engineer we should not be at all surprised. The only defect in an otherwise admirable book is that it lacks an index.

Peter Martin, in Mr. Schling's book, retires from business, buys a place, and plants a garden. He started from scratch and "knew flowers only as they came from a flower shop." But Peter has impeccable intuition and the invaluable advice of an astute seedsman, "Johnny Garden" (by an interesting coincidence, Mr. Schling is also a seedsman), so he makes no mistakes, and also seems to have encountered no pests or blights. The value of the book lies in the excellent lists of plants, with colors, height, and flowering season, and in careful directions for building paths and rock gardens, planting hedges, and for the care of house plants. There is a quaint turn of phrase that makes it pleasant reading, and it has an excellent index.

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# $4,370 for Every Family?

*THE CHART OF PLENTY. By Harold Loeb and Associates. New York: The Viking Press.* 1935. $2.

Reviewed by E. G. NOURSE

THIS small book is a product of the most ambitious attempt thus far made to answer the question whether our national productive capacity is sufficient to provide a good living for all our people. It is précis of the report of the National Survey of Potential Product Capacity carried out last year through the use of CWA funds. The full report is in process of publication.

Under the supervision of a dozen experts, largely engineers, some forty to fifty assistants were set to work in March, 1934 to assemble data covering

> the production and capacity of every item from coal and iron ore to toys and radios. Other men were seeking to follow unusual byways of our economy. As an example, questionnaires were sent to every state asking figures on county fairs, on the wild-game kill, and on similar items. Another investigator was looking into the production of bulbs, flowers, and young trees. Still another worker, or rather a series of workers, was attempting to discover our national capacity for providing entertainments—the cinema, the theater, circuses. . . .

They didn't intend to miss even the man on the flying trapeze!

Thus it would appear that the NSPPC was not to be bound by the limitations of existing data but undertook to track every relevant fact about capacity "from face powder to armor plate" to its lair, drag it forth, and coördinate it with every other until "every pertinent bit of statistics was finally transferred to its particular niche on the flow sheet, where, like a voice in a chorus, it helped swell the final volume of goods and services."

When it comes to the actual tabulation of results, however, it appears that items even more important than face powder were left out of the reckoning.

> No capacities are given on the chart for coal mining or petroleum extraction . . . because . . . consumers' satisfaction is not dependent on the present capacity of the working equipment . . . were it deficient, it could quickly be remedied. A coal mine can be opened in a short time. Much drilling equipment that could be boring for oil is deliberately kept idle today in order not to "flood" the market. And despite the fact that we have adequate fuel reserves, the United States Government with great foresight is at present developing water power. . . . No capacities have been given on the chart for (metal) mining or quarrying operations. The capacity of our metal mines is omitted for a very different reason than was that of our coal mines. Opening new underground metal mines requires time and elaborate equipment. Also the results are often uncertain. Metals exist nearly everywhere on the earth's crust, but only rarely are they sufficiently concentrated to repay, at least under the existing economic and technologic set-up, the effort required to extract them.

It would appear that one or the other of these reasons might also have been invoked for leaving out any other item in the chart.

Of those included, many are listed as "indefinite." "Butter and cheese-making facilities are indefinite. The supply of milk is the only limiting factor. Nearly the same can be said for bread, cake, etc., since our bakeries are equipped to supply more than the country's need." But how much more? Surely the 1929 plant could not have been stretched ten or twenty or *n* times. Of other "indefinite" capacities, we read "the production of plumbing and heating fixtures, telephone and telegraph equipment, and so forth is not limited by the processing facilities but only by the availability of the needed materials, and there is a sufficiency of these." Would not the same logic apply to all other fabricators of products derived from mine and quarry? One might suggest this also with reference to industries whose materials are of farm origin if one looks at the statement: "The American farmer has a real though unmeasurable 'excess product capacity.'" But when one reads, "So much consideration has been given to food because no 'unused plant capacity' exists for farm products," the matter seems less clear.

While it is clear that the capacities taken are those of 1929, it is not so easy for the reader to feel sure as to the conditions under which these capacities are supposed to be operated. At times it is referred to as under the "existing technology." At other points, however, the promise of abundance seems to be based on other grounds. For instance:

> By utilizing more efficiently the farm land under cultivation, the domestic needs of the nation could be satisfied. The present use of chemical fertilizers is small. By a relatively minor expansion of the chemical industries, supplies of fertilizer that would increase farm production by a quarter to a half could be produced. By further mechanization, productivity could be increased.

Likewise a considerable reorganization of our productive system is apparently involved, with the "allocation" of equipment and supplies from points of excess to others where "bottlenecks" exist. It would appear also that there has been considerable smoothing out of the seasonality of operations. Similarly, there has been a free resort to double or triple shifting in major industries contrary to prevailing practices and labor adjustment. Four pages devoted to the discussion of labor do not show the reserve of unused labor whence these extra shifts are to be drawn. Instead it apparently relies upon the increase in numbers (2,812,000) of laborers up to 1934 and an imputed increase in their efficiency during the years since 1929. This would seem a slender basis on which to argue a potential increase of two-fifths in the output of the busiest years of the prosperous era.

The presenting of so large a matter in so small a volume inevitably results in the omission of many details of method, tedious to the layman, though vital to the serious student of the problem. Whether all the adjustments proposed within the authors' definition of "potential" capacity are feasible and have been justified on the original worksheets, it is impossible to learn from a reading of "The Chart of Plenty." The economist or statistician who wishes to satisfy himself on these points must resort to the full report and spend many tedious hours of careful checking before he will know precisely what has been done and whether his mind will accept the conclusions which Mr. Loeb and his associates present in brief summary.

What, then, are the specific findings of the study? The directors asked themselves the question: "What is the product capacity of the existing (1929) plant if production is limited by physical factors only?" To this they answer: "The existing plant, by utilizing its unused capacity, could produce goods at a rate which would supply the needs and reasonable wants of the whole people." These needs and wants are interpreted through various dietary, clothing, housing, health, and educational standards to mean a national budget of 135 billion dollars. It is computed that in comparable terms we actually produced in 1929 $93,919,000,000, or $3,184 per family. Anyone familiar with the figures will realize that this latter amount is larger than the realized income of families in 1929 or of the goods and services currently produced in that year. This discrepancy is due to the authors' method of adding imputed items such as the rent of owned dwellings and of using cash prices at retail for food consumed by rural families. Since the same method of computation, however, is used in the national budget, the two figures may be compared to see how much their estimates of potential capacity runs above the output of 1929. On the basis of 135 billion dollars of national income, this would amount to forty-four per cent. However, the authors translate this into a family income of $4,370 which would be an increase of only thirty-seven per cent above the $3,184 family income which they claim for 1929.

The abundance thus charted is not so wide as a church door (held invitingly open by Stuart Chase) nor so deep as a well (plumbed by Howard Scott). But 'tis enough: 'twill serve.

*E. G. Nourse is director of the Institute of Economics of the Brookings Institution.*

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# The German Church

*GOD AMONG THE GERMANS. By Paul F. Douglass. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.* 1935. $3.

Reviewed by REINHOLD NIEBUHR

THE recrudescence of a primitive racial religion in a culturally advanced nation is an interesting phenomenon. Perhaps the conscious revival of primitiveness in a ripe culture is as obvious a betrayal of decadence as can be found in the history of culture. The German religious situation is therefore interesting not only to political observers and theologians but to all analysts of contemperary culture. Mr. Douglass gives the American reader the first opportunity to review the theories of the various proponents of a Nordic religion and to follow the history of the struggle between the racialists and the Christian church in detail. MacFarland's "The New Church and the New Germany" made some of this material available previously but it is presented in fuller outline by Douglass.

Unfortunately the author does no more than present the material. His single interpretive chapter is quite inadequate. It presents the struggle in terms of the old conflict between church and state. If no more had been involved the Lutheran church would have been more submissive, for it has a long history of submission to the state. The fact is that the religion of Rosenberg, Ludendorff, von Reventlow, Hauer, Wirth, and Schirach is something more than mere loyalty to a totalitarian state. The political philosophy of Hegel had some influence on their thought; but the more important sources of their position are to be found in Herder, Schlegel, and the romanticists. The author makes no effort to trace these roots. He does no more than mention the relation between the pseudo-anthropology of Chamberlain's "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century" and Rosenberg's "The Myth of the Twentieth Century."

It would be even more important to

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know why the soul of the modern German offers such good soil for these tares. Does a proud but humiliated nation express itself inevitably in terms of political attitudes raised to religious intensity? The similarities between the thought of the romanticists who flourished after Germany's defeat by Napoleon and these modern romantics might point to some interesting conclusions along this line. Or is this racial religion the characteristic spiritual expression of the lower middle classes, confused in the disintegration of a social system and frantically constructing the race into a community of loyalty in opposition to the worker's class loyalties and the internationalism of the plutocracy? These and similar problems of interpretation remain unanswered in this volume. It may nevertheless be accepted gratefully as an honest and diligent presentation of the bare facts.

## Life After Death

*THE ILLUSION OF IMMORTALITY. By Corliss Lamont. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.* 1935. $3.

Reviewed by HARRY T. COSTELLO

TO give plausible reasons today for believing in a life beyond the grave, to state in any reasonable details what that life would be like, or even to decide what sort of future life would be desirable had we complete choice, is for the thoughtful person not easy to do. Except for the influence of tradition, the "ideal" of an eternal hell would now gain few supporters. Even as regards heaven, we might sympathize with the lady who expressed reluctance to go: "There will probably be a bunch of superior women there, and even a few men, but certainly no men that any woman would care to meet." Neither the resurrection of the body nor a resurrection that is disembodied seems to fit in with our present knowledge and modes of thought.

Yet, as Mr. Lamont remarks, there have been many books written in defense of a belief in immortality, and few to attack it. He has tried to fill the gap, with a work so many-sided and thorough that the defenders will indeed be put on the defensive at every point. He surveys the history of belief in immortality; he marshals what science has to say about mind and body; he assails the arguments from ethics and from human desires; he grows sarcastic about the strange pictures of the heavenly scene which our popular preachers still portray from their pulpits. He is not flippant, however, nor does he lack sympathy with the feelings of human hearts in the dark hour of bereavement. Writing in a way that will be comprehensible to thoughtful readers, and answering objections by anticipation, he builds his argument to a conclusion that all intelligent people today either evade the issue, or admit that there is no evidence for a life after death.

Must we, then, surrender to Mr. Lamont's argument? It means the surrender of all that makes Christianity a distinctive religion. But his argument, if it proves that, proves more. It proves too much. It involves the surrender of all idealistic or dualistic philosophy, in favor of a completely materialistic monism. The mind is only the functioning of the nervous system. Personality is memory, and memory is tracks in the brain. Maybe so, but it is not obvious, and one must demur about the proof. Does it even make sense? Where the memories keep themselves, when we are not thinking of them, is indeed a problem. But surely these memories themselves are no more tracks in the brain than the quality of a color is the length of a light wave, or a sunset a logarithm. A strictly materialistic monism is a more perfect piece of nonsense than an angel sitting on a cloud. In spite of his philosophy, however, Mr. Lamont has written a remarkable book. It is good enough to jolt a good many complacent people awake from their easy illusions.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (NUMBER 56)

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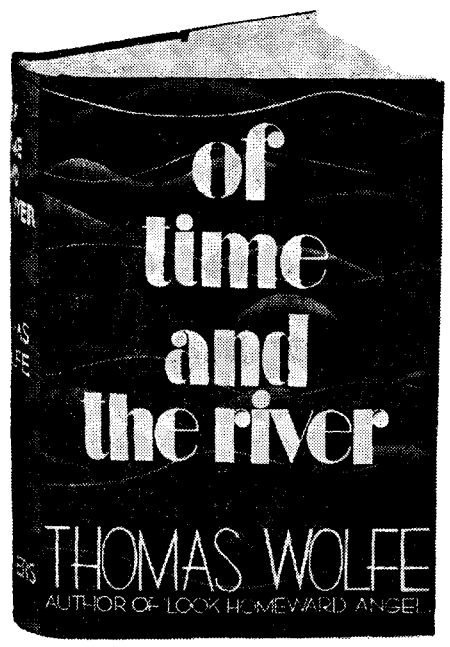


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# Modern Painting and Sculpture

*ART NOW. By Herbert Read. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1934. $3.75.

Reviewed by PEPPINO MANGRAVITE

THIS is not just another book on modern art. It is a long time, it seems, since an unpretentious book on this subject has been written. Of all the extensive literature on art we have been confronted with in the past two years, what does not shout of propaganda, smacks of puritanism. That is one reason why "Art Now" is refreshing to the mind. It delivers no sermons, but deals directly with recent developments in painting and sculpture; defends no schools; condemns nobody; is free from intellectual prejudices; is presented with decorum and humility; and is written in lucid English. It has style without forced individuality.

In this book, Mr. Herbert Read, formerly professor of the Fine Arts in the University of Edinburgh, gives us a systematic criticism of those aspects of art which we identify with the work of the modern artist, through which he shows us "the artist modern in sentiment as well as in circumstance. . . ." His conception of art is not confined within national boundaries. He recognizes the racial characteristics in the work of nordic artists, for instance, but scores, and rightly so, certain nationalistic political attitudes toward it. Mr. Read is not interested in prophesying what bearing such an attitude would have on modern art. He proves, however, that its development "has nothing whatsoever to do with sentiments external to its nature." He is mainly concerned in the first part of his book with the canons of beauty established by classical tradition, and with their excesses of reason and its devitalizing influence on creative art in the eighteenth century. He explains how in the following century, the traditional art of the Renaissance (the art of Humanism) remains one tradition right down to the impressionist and even to the post-impressionist schools; that is to say, the academic tradition of these schools from the empirical method to its submission to scientific scepticism; then the gradual change to a new conception of art and the transition to symbolism. He analyzes the parallel courses in the modes of art by the intellectual modern artists and the emotional expression of the old masters. Logically enough Mr. Read's thesis includes a philosophical and psychological explanation of the theory of abstract form. It is satisfying to note that unlike most critics he can write on this subject with understanding and conviction. In consequence, he does not need to resort to platitudes to make his meaning clear. Even those who have found the subject disturbing to their complacency toward modern art should find his argument convincing.

In conclusion, the author gives us a deplorably brief and unsatisfactory account of the "theory of subjective idealism" and an explanation of the factors which direct the activity of the artist. It would not have been irrelevant to his critical method if he had brought into his argument those humanistic aspects which are conducive to the activity of the artist. It would have made it easier for the reader to understand the artist's "mysterious equivalence between thought and action."

Mr. Read's critical approach is pragmatic in method. He makes the reader conscious of the continuity of creative art by the way he sounds the fibres of its leaves through the roots of the tree. That is another reason why his criticism has logic. His book appears on these shores at a psychological time, for it adds a note on symbolism in painting which has been missing from the recent American literature on art.

The volume contains a large number of full page illustrations of paintings and sculpture, from the shorthand pictorial statements of Henri Matisse to the Surrealist's dream-imagery of André Masson. Many of these illustrations are superfluous, partly because they are irrelevant to the text and partly because they are repetitions of other illustrations.

# A Hearn Bibliography

*LAFCADIO HEARN: A Bibliography of His Writings by P. D. and Ione Perkins. With an Introduction by Sanki Ichikawa, Professor of English at Tokyo Imperial University. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1934. $6.

Reviewed by BERTHA S. COOLIDGE

THIS is an exceedingly comprehensive and imposing volume of over four hundred pages, published by Houghton Mifflin & Company in Boston but printed at Tokyo by the Kenkyusha Press. In his appreciative introduction Professor Ichikawa states that "though as a literary luminary Hearn may be ranked as a star of the second magnitude, yet he is certainly one of those figures who enjoy the greatest collecting importance, and his first editions are getting more and more difficult to obtain, and his letters, when they do appear in market, fetch prohibitory prices in spite of the fact that he was a voluminous letter writer."

Following the introduction and the compilers' foreword of thanks to assistants and coöperators in many countries, are descriptions of first editions, translations by Hearn, translations of his works into fifteen foreign languages, books and reviews of him in half as many more, periodicals and newspapers containing views of and by him, unpublished material by and about him, with a list of his writings which have been set to music and a fairly comprehensive index at the end.

So much of Hearn's early work was scattered and so many of his later essays were transcribed from lectures taken down in his Japanese classrooms that uncertainty in regard to first printings still exists. There is a confusion of classification in the Perkins Bibliography which raises grave doubts as to the reliability of the authors' final decision in these matters. The list of "First Editions" is stated to include "a few books by other authors which contain original work by Lafcadio Hearn." In turning the pages one finds no special identification of certain of these volumes nor a logical reason for their inclusion in this first group. It is disconcerting to meet translations, handbooks, etc., here, with all the distinction of a full bibliographical description and in some cases only a short note at the foot of the page which indicates where the Hearn contributions may be found.

Technical disappointments appear also. The authors prefer to transcribe Hearn's name only, in upper case in each title, which tends to make further identification by type useless. This is a matter of taste. Parenthesis marks are used throughout in place of the square brackets which should evidently appear; but the lavish use in the collations of such expressions as "blank leaves tipped in" or "inserted" and "not included in the pagination" can only mean that these should have been described as part of the binding to which they rightfully belong.

As the first comprehensive bibliography of works by and concerning Hearn, more especially with relation to his newspaper contributions and his international reputation, this volume is very valuable. The last word on such a subject is never said, and the Perkins Bibliography will undoubtedly be supplemented later both here and in Japan.

# Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

| *Trade Mark* | *Label* | *Contents* | *Flavor* |
|---|---|---|---|
| MR. CRUSOE'S YOUNG WOMAN *Sheila MacDonald* (Coward-McCann: $2.) | Romance | Our heroine, super-servant of the Rhodesian Childerstones, discovers points in an eccentric prospector. | Nice |
| PANTOUFLE *Frederick Jackson* (Knopf: $2.50.) | Light Novel | He was born with the gift of laughter and a sense that the feminine world was his erster. | Gay—so gay and continental |
| A SPY WAS BORN *Marthe McKenna* (McBride: $2.) | Novel | The lady who wrote up her experiences in I Was a Spy has worked the background into acceptable fiction. | Diverting |

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# The New Books

## Art

*ROGERS GROUPS. By Mr. and Mrs. Chetwood Smith. Boston: Charles E. Goodspeed & Company.* 1935.

This is the first comprehensive round-up of the work of this American artist who certainly reached the hearts of his countrymen as well as their pocketbooks. He set out to make sculpture familiar household goods, embodying in it the everyday life of his times. In his home town in New Canaan his studio is still full of his bronzes and plaster models. Neighbors posed for some of the groups; members of the family for many others. "Old Flo," the Silliman boys' horse, was the steed who daily served for "Going for the Cows." Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of State, a visiting neighbor when a boy, "stood" for the piece called "Hide and Seek," No. 40. This figure Mr. Rogers painted over with lifelike oils. It now stands on an estate on the Hudson. Edwin Booth posed for a number of the Shakespearean groups, some of which are extraordinary for execution and character portrayal. Working with a mirror at his back Mr. Rogers put into his portraits and groups every possible detail of costuming and anatomy. The quantity and diversity of the Rogers sculpture is notable. The group called "The Bath," two partly draped children one in a small tub, a clean-minded mother in the background, was withheld from further "publication" because of adverse criticism, the composition being considered "too nude." This is the extreme from which modern sculpture has swung. Brancusi, Zorach, Epstein, and the hairline modelling of John Rogers have little but labor and patience in common.

E. K. P. S.

## Biography

*THE ISLANDMAN. By Tomás Ó Crohan. Scribners.* 1935. $2.50.

This is the second book translated from the Irish about the Blaskets, those storm-troubled islands off the Kerry coast. An islander who knows only the main island and a piece of the mainland has in each instance turned to the pen. Tomás Ó Crohan writes as if telling stories around a turf fire. He overelaborates the talk, but in the end the reader has a good idea of life in the Great Blasket between forty and sixty years ago. As with most speakers of Irish he has deft use of word, a large repository of traditional story and proverb, a definite relation of the eye to gradations of external nature, and a copious vocabulary.

Through his eyes we see boyhood and early manhood, and a life curiously remote from that most of us know. The first case of tea ever washed ashore was used by the women to dye their petticoats or to feed pigs. The islanders drank seal oil, cured porpoise meat, and used shad, seal, and shark oil in lamps. The only beast of burden in Mr. Ó Crohan's youth was man. Women, waist deep, unloaded fish from the strong eight-oared boats; they carried creels of turf down from hilly boglands or seaweed up from salt water to manure the fields. Sixty years ago the rent of his small holding was fifty dollars; it is now four and one-half dollars.

The bitterness of the steady fight against sea and land, the heartbreaking, uncertain toil of the sea, and the draining of youth to the New Island, America, mingle with seal fights, victories over bailiffs, and police who come to collect rent, and hard drinking at mainland fairs. Life is hard in the Blaskets where the islandmen fight sea and land; they are fishermen, keen-eyed salvagers of wreckage, farmers, and hunters. Neither the harshness of the land, the uncertainty of sea, nor the desolation of old age, and he is now seventy-nine, seem to break men like Ó Crohan.

E. O'M.

## Fiction

*THE SEVEN PILLARS. By Fernández Flórez. Macmillan.* 1935. $2.50.

Few of the qualities commonly thought of as Spanish are exhibited by this fantastic satire, which has recently had considerable popular success in the new Iberian Republic. There are no gypsy dance rhythms and little torrid passion in the work of this new writer. Instead, Señor Flórez has described with bitter humor the grim comedy of modern industrial life, presenting millionaires who use their charitable contributions to add lustre to their names, sycc tists and critics, starving and consumptive mine workers, and businesslike actresses in full career. But throughout he has preserved a feeling for the grotesque and supernatural which betrays the sceptic only recently converted from the mysticism of his forefathers. In this he is apparently characteristic of the new Spain which is emerging in such troubled and uncertain fashion from the revolution of 1931. The second part of his book pictures a sinless world almost as dull as the post-capitalistic Utopias of tomorrow, which of course proves in the end to be firmly supported by "The Seven Pillars"—our old friends of consummate deadliness. An entertaining performance, though in its English dress sometimes a puzzling one, this example of the newer Spanish fiction is well worth reading, and the bizarre but real talent of its author does credit to the remarkable race which has given us such unusual literary personalities as Cervantes, Góngora, and Uñamuno. Peter Chalmers Mitchell has done an excellent translation of a no doubt difficult Castilian original.

T. P., JR.

*BLESSED IS THE MAN. By Louis Zara. Bobbs-Merrill.* 1935. $2.50.

Jake Krakauer came to America in 1890, at the age of twenty, a penniless Russian Jew who knew nothing about the country of his adoption. He met, in Chicago, with a good deal of help from relatives and acquaintances of relatives; but his success was due to his immediate adoption of the American motto, Time is Money. Jake saved his pennies in his peddling days, and gradually was able to change his business. He became a storekeeper; then the proprietor of a number of stores; and finally the owner of the largest grocery store in the world, situated in Chicago.

In Jake, Louis Zara has shown with no little skill the rise of one of that class of Jews who are treated with contempt born of fear by most members of any community. Jake set out to do one thing, and did it, did it well. He made money, he

(*Continued on page* 658)

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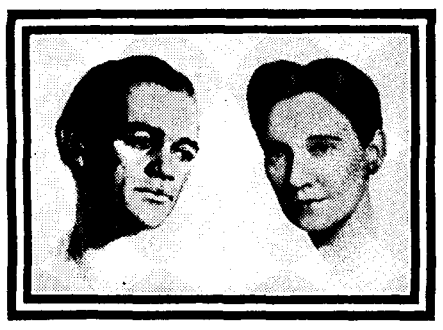

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# The Clearing House

Conducted by AMY LOVEMAN

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to Miss Loveman, c/o *The Saturday Review*. A stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

### A Program on the Drama

*"My club," writes* E. S. of Weehawken, N. J., *"desires a list of recent books—biographical sketches, plays, collections of plays, and other books that women may need in a reading and discussion course on 'Dramatists of Today.'"*

The best plays of 1933-34 (Dodd, Mead), edited by Burns Mantle, is a rather stereotyped product but it might prove useful to the club in giving it the lay of the land. A yearbook of the drama, it presents a survey of the theatrical season in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and southern California, and contains excerpts from ten of the leading plays of the last season. Rather than to use these plays in their truncated form, however, it would be well to select some few of the recent successes and read and discuss them in their totality. There are, for instance, Maxwell Anderson's mary of scotland (Doubleday, Doran), a play interesting whatever you may think of its author's interpretation of the character of the unfortunate Stuart queen, and yellow jack (Harcourt, Brace), by Sidney Howard and Paul De Kruif, which such critics as Brooks Atkinson of the *New York Times* hailed as introducing a new and invigorating quality into our contemporary drama, Sidney Kingsley's men in white (Covici-Friede), winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and like yellow jack using medicine as a pivot to its action, and Sean O'Casey's within the gates (Macmillan), which despite its frequent sensationalism and occasional hysteria, is in poetic concept, stretches of moving and beautiful discourse, and sincere if sometimes fumbling handling of spiritual problems, a highly interesting work. There is, too, though it is hardly fair to discuss it apart from its setting and musical accompaniment, Gertrude Stein's four saints in three acts (Random House). A recent play, propagandist in intention but good theatre nonetheless, is Albert Maltz's black pit (Putnams), the portrayal of a mining group. With it might be bracketed another propagandist play, stevedore (Covici-Friede), by Paul Peters and George Sklar, the action of which is concerned with a race riot in New Orleans.

The club, I think, would find that the foregoing plays constituted some of the more outstanding offerings of the recent stage so far as America is concerned. I have confined the list to this country, though there is one collection of foreign plays, which, if the group wishes to go further afield, it would certainly find interesting; that is six soviet plays (Houghton Mifflin), edited by Eugene Lyons. Here, in more or less challenging form, is an illuminating footnote on contemporary Russia. But E. S. wants something besides plays themselves. Her club would doubtless enjoy John Mason Brown's letters from greenroom ghosts (Viking), a work in which Mr. Brown deftly carries on an interchange of correspondence between playwrights and dramatic critics of the past and those who might be presumed to have affinity with them in the present. It would find highly instructive at the same time as entertaining Morton Eustis's broadway, inc.! (Dodd, Mead), a description of the theatre as a business and of theatrical productions in all their phases, and there is excellent material for club interest in whatever goes up (Bobbs-Merrill), by George C. Tyler. All sorts and conditions of men and women march through its pages and lend it liveliness. So do they also in Marie Dressler's my own story (Little, Brown) in which a favorite of the legitimate stage recounts not only her experiences on it but her return to popularity in later life in the movies.

### Jane Austen Plays

*E. E. McG. of Chicago, Ill., wants to know whether there are any plays about Jane Austen, and whether any of her novels have been dramatized.*

There was an unsuccessful play about Jane Austen entitled "Dear Jane" which held the New York stage for a short time only about a year ago. But otherwise I know of none of which she is the heroine. There is a dramatization by Mrs. Mackay of "Pride and Prejudice" which French publishes, and another one by Helen Jerome is under way. This last is to be a vehicle for Katherine Hepburn.

### Encyclopedias for Children

*L. I. of Quincy, Ill., wishes the names and addresses of the best encyclopedias for parents with growing children.*

I should say that the determination of a cyclopedia for family use would depend to a great extent upon the age of the children. If they are of high school age, or even of late elementary school age, a standard work like the britannica (Fourteenth edition: $114.50) or the new international encyclopaedia (Funk & Wagnalls: 13 vol. ed., $105), is to my mind far better than any work designed specifically for the young. My own preference would go to the new international which personally I think is the best working cyclopedia for general use for Americans. It keeps its material up to date by issuing a yearbook, and includes a vast amount of information of the type which the child's work is likely to demand. For young children, of course, something simpler than these adult sets will be needed. The latest cyclopedia for young folk is britannica junior (12 vols.: $67.50); the work has been severely criticized on many scores, but it is nevertheless a library of highest usefulness for the young. So, too, are the American productions, compton's pictured encyclopedia (Chicago: Compton: 15 vols.: $69.50), and the world book encyclopedia (Chicago: Quarrie: 13 vols.: $66). Both of these are the work of contributors of high excellence, are elaborately illustrated, and are written in such fashion that the adult as well as the child can read them with interest. In my own youth young people everywhere had champlin's cyclopedia for young folk. We read it backward and forward and got most of our miscellaneous information from its two gray-bound volumes. It is reappearing now under the title new champlin cyclopedia for young folk (Holt), only four volumes ($6 each) having so far been issued. I still look upon it with tender affection.

# The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

| *Title and Author* | *Crime, Place, Sleuth* | *Summing Up* | *Verdict* |
|---|---|---|---|
| THE GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL *Edward Acheson* (Macrae-Smith: $2.) | Pedagogue suspected of killing creditor whose wife loves him (ped.). Friendly reporter spots real killer. | More psychological case-history than mystery, but swift action moves to a surprising conclusion. | Engaging |
| KEEP AWAY FROM WATER *Alice Campbell* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.) | American "companion" of threatened English lady, and young doctor, solve trio of strange killings. | Experts will recognize method of murder as used before. Plenty of action and super-thrilling climax. | Good |
| THE MURDER OF MISS BETTY SLOAN *Sidney Williams* (Appleton-Century: $2.) | Unfortunate lady found dead in her Phila. apartment after wild party. American "J. G. Reeder," name of Twombley, called in by D. A. | Miss Sloan was poisoned. Other occasional deaths prop up interest in Twombley's plodding among the too gay, too rich suspects. | O.K. for t. b. m. |
| THE CASE OF THE COUNTERFEIT EYE *Erle Stanley Gardiner* (Morrow: $2.) | Glass-eyed gent appeals to Perry Mason to save him from impending crime which involves lost optic. | Even the fact that case could have been solved by page 100 can't kill interest of remainder. | Good |

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# BIG NEWS

## A BIG SURPRISE

NEXT WEEK, SATURDAY, MAY 4th, you will be startled to receive your copy of the Saturday Review in a bright and interesting new form. At first, you may not recognize an old friend. The new typographical appearance, the new size, the handsome printing qualities of the higher grade paper may make you wonder who this attractive stranger is.

You will know as soon as he speaks. The familiar voice of the editors and regular contributors will assure you that your old friend has merely shaved off his beard. There is a sparkle in his eye, a sprightly new cut to his clothes, a renewed confidence in his personal well-being. You will be glad to see him in such fine fettle.

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The Saturday Review has been planning this change in format for many months. We had begun to feel the need of opening up the windows and letting fresh air rustle through the accumulated traditions of our first ten years. It has freshened our minds (even brought color to our cheeks!) and we are delighted by the spontaneous and enthusiastic approval of those few intimate friends who have had a preliminary view of the first issue in the new form. We hope you too will be pleased with this new and yet ever older Saturday Review.

*The Saturday Review*
of LITERATURE
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**DISTINGUISHED WOMEN WRITERS**

**BY VIRGINIA MOORE**


## The New Books

(*Continued from page* 655)

constantly enlarged his business, he became a financial power of sorts. Nevertheless, Jake feels from time to time that his devotion to gain has cost him something. He does not quite understand what it has cost him; but as he sees the rest of his family, imported one at a time from Russia as Jake can pay their passage, he sometimes feels that he is out of things.

His brother Mottel, characterless but shrewd, becomes an influential politician, and moves in circles closed to Jake. Dovvid, the dreamer and idealist, who was a refugee from Siberia, remains poor and helpless, but firm in his faith and proud: with him Jake can do nothing. Vaguely he feels that they have something that he has not; but he knows not what it is. The best he can do is to help them; and when his helpfulness is only an obstacle to them, he cannot understand that, either.

However, it is not alone the story of Jake and his family that make of "Blessed Is the Man" a book worth reading. The author has shown unusual ability to interpret character, the most varying sorts of character. He has been able to show the Russian Jew in many of his manifestations, and he has let the reader clearly see why Jews and *goyim* do not get along well together.

The story is a good one, a complete one, and one well told, except for a few lapses. The book is long; but it covers a long time and includes a great many characters, well defined and artistically presented. It can be recommended as good, solid, entertaining reading.

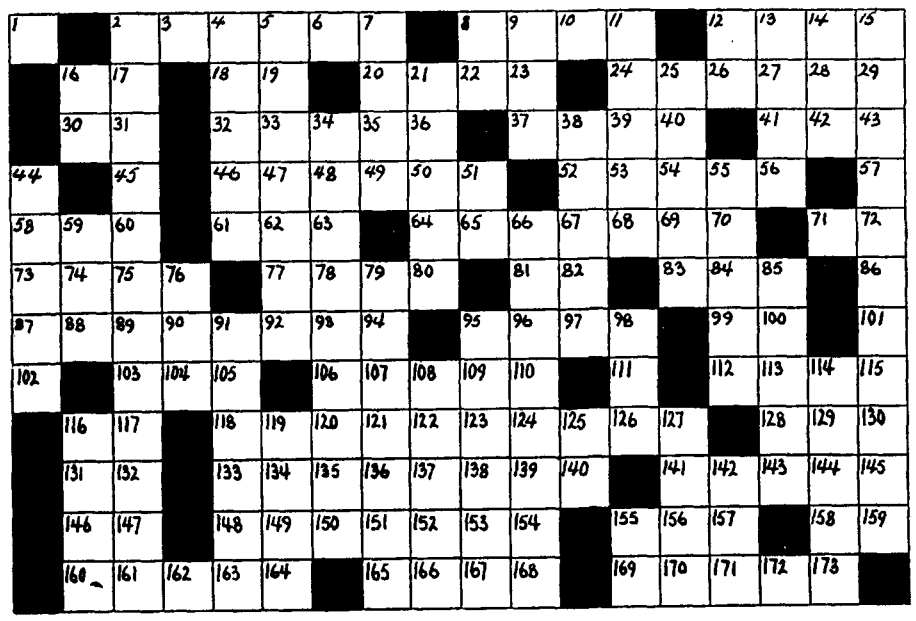
S. A. N.

## Brief Mention

We know what to expect of Frank Buck. His last book, *Fang and Claw* (Simon & Schuster, $2.50), is more diluted than his earlier volumes but good reading for those who like animal excitement. * * * Note also a new Chinese book in the series written by the Princess Der Ling, *Son of Heaven* (Appleton-Century, $3). * * * Almost as exotic in its subject and in its charming photographs but closer home is the rich study of our Southwest in *Winter in Taos* by Mabel Dodge Luhan, whose earlier books have done so much to make that region famous (Harcourt, Brace, $2.75). * * * A scholarly contribution to geography with extraordinary photographs of glaciers is The American Geographical Society's Special Publication No. 18, *The Fiord Region of East Greenland,* by Louise A. Boyd. The same region is the subject of *Leaves from a Greenland Diary,* by Ruth Bryan Owen (Dodd, Mead, $2), a personal record. * * * Spring fishers may get *Angling Success,* a symposium of all sorts of fishing by many authors (Macmillan, $2.50).

# Double-Crostics: No. 57

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



**DIRECTIONS**

*To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-eight words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.*

**DEFINITIONS**

I. The finish, end (compound).

II. Character in "Cymbeline."

III. Mischief-maker of Norse mythology.

IV. Popular American novelist (1876-1916).

V. Discernment, intuition.

VI. Popular state name of Arizona.

VII. Temporary expedient.

VIII. Cause of surprise or admiration.

IX. Sacred French battle ensign (1124-1415).

X. Without direction or method.

XI. Authoritative body of doctrines.

XII. Trim, orderly.

XIII. Vacillated, moved unsteadily.

XIV. Pseudonym of American writer (1862-1910).

XV. A poem by Scott in six cantos.

XVI. Character in Mother Goose.

XVII. Negro Republic.

XVIII. Muse of comedy.

XIX. Poetic for frequently.

XX. Eighteenth century periodical.

XXI. Member of an Iroquois tribe of Indians.

XXII. English writer of "Moral Tales" (1767-1849).

XXIII. Secret, retired.

XXIV. Long and slender.

XXV. Poetic story of a sea-faring wanderer.

XXVI. City in the Netherlands.

XXVII. Imbecile, foolish.

XXVIII. England's greatest tragic actress.

**WORDS**

169 111 62 157 118 89

39 131 97 153 15 146

69 53 110 58

57 108 126 93 149 67

47 150 86 66 127 52 145

155 41 35 109 103 91

143 45 11 88 173 134 16 82 30

8 101 59 151 121 92

31 14 116 102 50 141 27 158 75

72 152 171 36 161 18

163 25 137 4 65

140 12 104 122 94 38 166 112 28

77 26 148 5 46 115 22

99 138 13 156 79 23

100 129 80 85 20 70

83 113 64 128 19

90 1 123 68 144

48 87 9 6 170 73

147 95 71

117 61 98 107 154 55

44 3 162 78 124

168 63 172 51 160 81 33 133 2

114 96 167 60 130 37

10 42 49 84 159

21 24 132 17 40 34 56

136 43 120 7 74 165 32

142 54 106 139

164 125 76 29 135 119 105

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 653 of this issue.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## PERSONALS

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# The Compleat Collector

## RARE BOOKS

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## Books in Uniform

*PUBLISHER'S CLOTH: AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF PUBLISHER'S BINDING IN ENGLAND, 1820-1900. By John Carter. New York: R. R. Bowker Co. 1935. 35 cents.*

THE printed book as a fabricated entity is the same today as it was half a millennium ago. The Gutenberg Bible of 1455 or thereabouts differs in no structural essential from the Bruce Rogers Bible of 1935. Through all this span there is to be recorded only one radical departure in the involved economy of book production. For less than one hundred and fifty years has the book left the hands of the publisher in the state in which it was designed to reach the owner.

The explanation is cloth. The discovery of the adaptability of cloth to the casing of books was of more epochal significance in publishing than the invention of the linotype. "It threw back on the publisher," declares Mr. Carter in his admirable and compact essay, "a function of book production which had hitherto lain in the province of the retailer." For previously, "from the earliest days of printing down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the normal condition of any book during its wholesale period of existence was one of unblushing nakedness."

The bibliographical implications of the great transition are obvious. Virtually every Shakespeare First Folio possesses a distinct individuality to a degree that every copy of a Victorian three-decker has not. The contemporary purchaser of a First Folio had his copy tailored to his own inclinations. Thus, while a copy of a fifteenth-through-eighteenth book in its *original* binding is hardly an uncommon phenomenon, a copy of such a book *as issued* is, in the instance of most titles, unknown and doubtless forever unknowable.

Mr. Carter's "brief interim report of work in progress"—it stems from his "Binding Variants in English Publishing," (a unit in the essential Bibliographia Series)—offers in brief compass an adequate and understandable survey of a field with which every collector and student of the book owes it to himself to be familiar. Mr. Carter does more than this—he compresses his ten-thousand-word discussion into a thumbnail history of cloth (that is, edition) binding:

(1) Origins and the primitive style. 182?-1831
(2) The struggle for recognition. 1832-1840
(3) The establishment of supremacy. 1841-1855
(4) The expansion of the fabric range. 1856-1870
(5) Variations on the technically perfect instrument. 1871-1900

This table would doubtless parallel in the main the history of publisher's cloth in America.

## First-Class Mail

On or about June 2, 249 B.C., Lesonis of Tebtynis in the province of Arsinoë, Egypt, got a letter. Structurally it was somewhat longer, rather narrower, and much thicker than the postal card of today, for it was written on papyrus. It was in the hand of Polemon, governor of that district of Arsinoë which included Tebtynis, and it read:

> Polemon of Lesonis, High Priest of the Great God Soknebtynis, Greeting. It is our will that you prepare for our use three rooms, and bedding, and all things necessary, against our arrival with all our household. Above all, take care that, when we are come, there be no negligence. Farewell. The 36th year, the 11th day of the month of Pharmouthi.

I quote the translation as it appears in Catalogue No. 53 recently published by William H. Robinson Ltd. of Pall Mall, London, who devote two pages to its description and offer it at £75. The causes behind this evaluation merit inspection.

Polemon was not an important figure in the politics or the diplomacy of his time. If he were we should know more about him by way of the Robinson catalogue. One may assume, with equal assurance, the negligibility of his position in literature. Judging by this, his sole surviving manuscript, there were points to commend him. He was forthright, brusque, a niggard with words. He traveled light—set a toothbrush and a pinch of salt in his hand and he was up and away. His private life was the epitome of Spartan rigor, but when he asked for service, then, by Isis, he expected service.

Of Lesonis we know, and may reconstruct, even less. A methodical sort, one imagines; had slowly mounted the ecclesiastical ladder by virtue of doing nothing ill rather than of doing anything surpassingly well.

This assemblage of data, even if it were all provable, would not make Polemon's couriergram to Lesonis worth as much as a run-of-the-mine letter of George Washington. The explanation lies in the fact that Polemon's communication is about the earliest autograph letter with which any collector is likely to be able to grace his collection. Here is an example of the earliest known everyday European handwriting—cursive Greek. The most ancient surviving document that can be compared to it, according to Sir Edward Maunde Thompson's "History of Greek and Latin Paleography," antedates it by only eighteen years. Polemon the Unimportant builded better than he knew. So did Lesonis, High Priest of Soknebtynis and inventor of the filing system.

## PERSONALS

**YOUNG GIRL,** college graduate, desires secretarial position, or tutoring. Experienced. Box 313, Harrisburg, Pa.

**A PETITE,** vivacious gal of twenty-eight summers (winters don't count) wishes to stimulate a drab existence by corresponding with interesting male of approximately the same vintage. Kathleen.

**HOLD'ER ROBBIE!** Smoke gets in my eyes no more. Many thanks. "Yes and No."

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# The PHŒNIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I AM apprised that Texas is "localizing" its culture due to next year being its Centennial year. The Chairman of the Division of Community Service of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs recently informed the *Review* that during March and April every loyal Texan was urged to read the work of some Texas author. Till after this period, as she didn't see a single Texas writer listed as a contributor to the *Saturday Review*, she didn't know how the *Review* could be of much value to the Federation. It all made me pretty darned sad! . . . *Foreground*, A Preview of American Literature, is edited by those old American Caravan editors, *Paul Rosenfeld, Lewis Mumford,* and *Alfred Kreymborg;* and is to be published by W. W. Norton & Company. The book will be a collective venture. A minimum advance royalty is guaranteed. MSS. should be submitted to the editors, care the publishers, at 70 Fifth Avenue, this city, between October 1st and December 31st, 1935. Acceptances will be announced before May 1st, 1936. To your typewriters, Minute Men of America! . . . Write the Kentucky Derby Festival Committee, 421 W. Market Street, Louisville, Kentucky, for particulars concerning one feature of the week's festival of this year. This feature is to be a national reunion of authors. For the first time in seventy years the ponies and poetry are to be featured on the same bill! . . . *Richard Aldington,* now on the island of Tobago, is planning a play. . . . In the annals of the depression one doesn't often give a thought to librarians. But the *Wilson Bulletin* reports a letter received from a Minnesota one "with all the wild bleakness of something out of a Russian novel." It reads in part:

> I have no salary since April 1, 1934, and for 5 months before it was poor relief. . . . The Library has been closed since 7th as we have no wood. We are buried in snow and it is below zero. The ink is frozen. . . . The roof was on fire and the hole is still there. . . . My wood cost me $5.75 unpaid and $1.50 for chopping today. . . . The *Etude* is run out. I live in the Library yard alone. . . .

. . . In a month or so the Alcestis Press, of 551 Fifth Avenue, is publishing a group of six limited first editions of contemporary poets, including *Wallace Stevens, "H.D.,"* and *William Carlos Williams.* These poets are my own contemporaries, so I am glad to see them listed as "contemporary" still. Sometimes one feels like quite a back number!

A book with a really original slant to it is "Boss Rule: Portraits in City Politics," by *J. T. Salter,* (Whittlesey House) and it's a book that's badly needed at the moment too. . . . Owing to jury duty I didn't get around last Wednesday to meeting *Gertrude Stein* and hearing the phonograph records she has recently made under the auspices of American Speech, the National Council of the Teachers of English, and the Erpi Picture Consultants, Inc., in the studios of the Erpi Picture Consultants, Inc., only I can't get over the Erpi Picture Consultants, Inc! . . . Or maybe it's just the bad cold I've had. . . . Which has made doubly bitter *Louis Untermeyer's* postal to me from Italy. "Ah! Bella Napoli!" he cries. The louse! . . . Think of the Bay of Naples, and then of me with jury duty and a bad cold! . . . Also the Clerk of the Court pronounces my name Bee-nay. I certainly have my troubles! . . . I thank *Wilder Bentley* for sending me some broadsides of his. I have mentioned his Press before. He remarks, in part, that "from a collector's viewpoint the broadside has always been a damned nuisance. To collect them seriously, one needs almost as many sizes of portfolios as one has specimens. *C. P. Rollins* has worked out a pretty good alternative, though, in a vertical filing system, which no one understands, of course, except himself. But I feel that I have gone a long way toward solving the problem by folding the broadside and by tipping it in between boards or paper covers. Of course some collectors shudder at the very thought of folding a broadside, but they are apparently ignorant of the broadside's lowly origin and of the fact that handmade and mould made papers will stand much rough usage: they're extremely tough." . . . *Grenville Kleiser,* the author, offers a prize of twenty-five dollars for the best essay of about three hundred and fifty words on any subject of practical value—useful, helpful, or inspiring. Manuscripts must be typed and will not be returned. They must be original. A contestant may submit several. Open to anyone. Contest closes July 1, 1935. Winner's name will appear in *The American Author,* Upland, Indiana, for August, 1935. Mail MSS. to Grenville Kleiser (Essay Contest) 1 West 72nd Street, New York City. . . . A young German author, *Johann Rabener,* a discovery of *Jacob Wassermann's,* holds a record. Every business he entered went smash thereafter. First a bank in Amsterdam, then a large grain firm in Frankfurt, third a flax firm in Ghent, then a paper in Berlin on which Rabener was sports journalist. After being a newspaper space representative "during which time I did not earn sufficient to pay for a warm meal in three months," Rabener's father got him a job as German correspondent in a paper export business which had been established for over one hundred years. It closed down soon after he entered it. So then Rabener met up with Wassermann and the latter said to him, "Write, write, write!" So he wrote "Condemned to Live," which Doubleday, Doran have published. . . . *Eirene Mungo-Park,* who has written a fantasy in four scenes called "Pansy Joyce," which is published by the Parnassus Press, is a great grand-daughter of *Mungo Park,* the famous African explorer. The address of The Parnassus Press is Box 10, Station C, this City.

## Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

☞One of the best pieces of spring book promotion we have seen is the advance pamphlet issued by Yale University Press for Clarence Day's *Scenes from the Mesozoic* (coming May 7). The pamphlet, reproducing 18 of Mr. Day's drawings, is an amusing piece of persiflage on the business of putting over a book, from MS. to Literary Tea. ☞We gather from an Appleton-Century announcement that Conan Doyle believed in fairies, and that Dr. Jaeger "invented his woollens to keep the soul from escaping from the body"; but maybe they're just testing our credulity. The subject of the announcement is Joseph Jastrow's *Wish and Wisdom: Episides in the Vagaries of Belief.* Too bad it couldn't have been published the first of the month instead of the 26th (what a spot for an April Fool bookstore window), but we're looking forward to reading it.

☞The Children's Book Shop at Rochester is holding an exhibit of Children's Books by Vassar Alumnæ, including titles by Amy Wentworth Stone, Maud Petersham, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. ☞The exhibit of Practical Leica Photography, which opened this week at Radio City, includes numerous items by our Mr. Disraeli, many of which have appeared in these pages: James Stephens, Julian Huxley, Stefan Zweig, H. G. Wells, and others. This exhibit moves to Philadelphia next week, then to Washington, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Chicago, and Boston.

☞The current booklist from the Holiday Book Shop headlines Catherine Drinker Bowen's *Friends and Fiddlers,* a book about music and musicians which Quercus enjoyed reading and would like to see sell. ☞The English publishers of Mr. Canby's *Age of Confidence* describe it as "an intimate picture of a New England township forty years ago." Which is tough on Wilmington, Del. ☞Our timely readers have already supplied the translation of "aki a nagytelintélyü Saturday Review of Literature szerkesztöje," which we printed last week from a Hungarian pamphlet; it means "who is the editor of the distinguished Saturday Review of Literature"—a reference to Mr. Canby, not a question.

☞Ted McCawley, A. B. A. President, supplied the title for Humphrey Pakington's *The Eligible Bachelor,* which appeared in England as *In Company with Crispin.* Glad to see that Ted, like the Q. associates, is a Pakington fan. ☞Doubleday announces Frank Swinnerton's autobiography for the fall—which will be interesting, whether he writes as author, critic, or publisher. Meanwhile don't miss George H. Doran's publishing reminiscences, *Chronicles of Barabbas.*


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